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CATHOLIC SOCIAL GUILD PAMPHLETS

SECOND SERIES

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PREFACE

THIS second series of pamphlets, published by the Catholic Truth Society in connection with the Catholic Social Guild, follows the same main lines as its predecessor. Emphasis is laid, and not without necessity, on the paramount importance of pursuing social reform on Christian principles alone, and therefore under the general guidance of the Church. How intimate and earnest that guidance is, is shown in the opening pamphlet, and is further developed in the eloquent pastoral of the Bishop of Northampton. The "Social Catechism" gives in clear and taking form a conspectus of the whole field, the work to be done, the methods and the motives. It is an excellent antidote to the "Red Catechism" of Socialism which preaches irreligion and class hatred. In other papers there is instruction for the young just entering into public life on the just obligations of citizenship, there is valuable counsel for the mature on the nature and requirements of Christian marriage, there is information for all on the intimate connection between the true Catholic spirit and civil welfare, whether in the past or in the present. It is hoped that the collection into one volume of these eight pamphlets will help to stimulate and direct social study.

January, 1912.

CONTENTS

Rome and the Social Question.

A Catholic Social Catechism.

Catholic Social Work. By Mrs. Philip Gibbs.

The Church and Social Reformers. By the Bishop of Northampton.

Social Work on Leaving School. By C. D. Plater, S.J.

The Duties of Conjugal Life. By Cardinal Mercier.

The Social Sense: its Decay and its Revival. By Alexander P. Mooney, M.D.

English Economics and Catholic Ethics. By Michael Maher, S.J., D.Litt.

ROME AND THE SOCIAL QUESTION

PREFACE

THE documents contained in this collection are now for the first time presented in an English dress.

The Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs is of considerable importance as showing the mind of our Holy Father Pope Pius X on the direction of social activity.

The subsequent extracts present aspects of the social question from the point of view of the Christian workman.

Throughout the entire series the religious and supernatural elements in social work are prominent. The efficacious power of this God-given remedy is proclaimed with an energy and confidence which should encourage all Catholic social workers or students.

A final word. These instructions are not to be read lightly and then cast aside. They have been drawn up with extreme caution and a keen sense of responsibility. They ought, therefore, to be carefully studied as the formal guidance of our supreme religious authority.

HENRY PARKINSON.

I

INSTRUCTION OF THE SACRED CONGREGATION OF EXTRAORDINARY ECCLESIASTICAL AFFAIRS ON CHRISTIAN POPULAR ACTION OR CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC ACTION IN ITALY.

IT is well known that there have been differences of opinion, especially in these latter days, as to the

methods of developing and promoting Christian democratic action in Italy ; and these differences have, in no small measure, disturbed the union and harmony so ardently desired and recommended by the Holy Father.

For this reason, wishing to remove all causes of misunderstanding and disagreement among Italian Catholics, and at the same time to answer the many questions proposed in various quarters, his Holiness has ordered the present Instruction to be sent to the Bishops of Italy.

I. In his Encyclical *Graves de Communi* of January 18, 1901, his Holiness (Leo XIII) said : "*It is not lawful to give a political meaning to Christian democracy ; all political meaning must be discarded ;* (the precepts of nature and of the Gospel) *are and remain outside the sphere of parties and the changeableness of events ; the plans and action of Catholics ought by no means to aim at the preference and preparation of one form of government rather than another.*" [1]

These words ought to be understood as follows :—

(*a*) Christian democratic institutions, whatever be their character, should be looked upon as manifestations of Christian popular action, based on the natural law and on the precepts of the Gospel. They must, therefore, not be regarded as means for the attainment of political ends, or for changing any form of government.

(*b*) Christian democratic action, founded on justice and evangelical charity, covers so vast a field that when understood and practised according to the letter and the spirit of the instructions issued by the Holy See, it answers to the most far-reaching activities of Catholics, and contains, in all due proportion, the very action of the Church among the people. The letter *Permoti Nos*, addressed to the Cardinal-Archbishop of Mechlin on July 10, 1895, points out the scope of Catholic popular

[1] *The Pope and the People*, p. 271. C.T.S., 1s.

action as follows : "The social question presents more than one aspect to any one who seriously examines it. It relates, doubtless, to external goods, but above all, to religion and morality; it is also naturally so closely connected with the rules of civil legislation that, in a word, it embraces the rights and duties of all classes of society. Thus the evangelical principles of justice and charity—which we have recalled to your minds—when brought to bear on the practical side of life, must necessarily affect the numerous relations existing between individuals."

(*c*) Consequently in Christian democratic programmes, conferences, and newspapers, all questions may be dealt with which tend to the triumph of justice and to the practice of charity in favour of the people, and which form the real object of Christian democracy.

(*d*) Christian democratic newspapers may give information and criticism on political facts and opinions, but they must not pretend to speak in the name of the Church, nor impose their particular view in questions which are still open, as though such as think differently from themselves were not sincere Catholics.

(*e*) It is not enough that Christian democrats should not speak in the name of the Church when they treat of purely political matters ; in Italy they must refrain from participation in any particular action whatever, following the spirit and the letter of the two following Pontifical pronouncements : "Just as the participation of Catholics in administrative elections is praiseworthy and more than ever to be recommended, so must it be avoided in political elections as not expedient, for reasons of the highest order, one of the principal being the treatment of the Sovereign Pontiff which, assuredly, is not compatible with the full liberty and independence of his apostolic ministry."[1] "In the present state of

[1] Letter to his Eminence Card. Parocchi, May 14, 1895.

things, the action of Italian Catholics, holding aloof from politics, concentrates itself on the social and religious ground. Its object is to raise the moral tone of the people, to make them obedient to the Church and to its Head, to withdraw them from the dangers of socialism and anarchy, to teach them respect for the principle of authority, finally, to relieve their poverty by the numerous works of Christian charity." [1]

(*f*) It is the duty of all Catholic journalists, and consequently of all Christian democrats and of any one who wishes to take part in Catholic action, ever to maintain in the people a lively sentiment and conviction of the intolerable condition to which the Holy See has been reduced since the invasion of its States. They should let slip no opportunity of making known, and of recalling, the solemn and unceasing protests of the Holy Father, as well as the very lofty motives by which they are prompted. True Catholics should be ever mindful of the numerous and weighty documents issued by the Sovereign Pontiffs, Pius IX and Leo XIII, claiming the sacred rights and the independence of the Apostolic See. Along with the Vicar of Christ they should remember that "it is useless to misrepresent the character of this struggle by introducing *human interests* and *political ends*, as though, even while We claim pontifical sovereignty in order to safeguard the independence and liberty of the Head of the Church, it were not a question of eminently religious interests." [2] It is right, moreover, to remember the decrees and declarations of the Sacred Congregations, and especially the rules given on various occasions by the Sacred Penitentiary concerning practical cases which have reference to the invasion of the States of the Church.

[1] Letter to the bishops, clergy, and people of Italy, August 5, 1898.

[2] Allocution to the Sacred College, December 23, 1890.

II. In the foundation and direction of periodical journals, including those of Christian popular action, the clergy must faithfully observe the regulations of Article 42 of the Apostolic Constitution *Officiorum*, January 25, 1897.[1] Christian democratic journalists, like all Catholic journalists, ought to put into practice these admonitions of the Holy Father: "Let the rule of conduct for writers be to submit with docility to their bishops, *to whom the Holy Ghost has entrusted the direction of the Church of God.* Let them respect episcopal authority, and undertake nothing without their approval; for they are the leaders to be followed in the combat for religion."[2] "The duty of journalists, in all that concerns religious interests and the action of the Church in society, is to submit fully in mind and heart, like all the rest of the faithful, to their bishops and to the Sovereign Pontiff; to carry out, and to make known their orders, to second their initiative loyally; to respect their decisions, and to make others respect them."[3] "It must not be thought that those alone fail in their duty as Catholics, who openly reject the authority of their chiefs; they also are wanting in it who oppose this authority by astute evasions, by an equivocal and insincere policy. True and straightforward obedience is not content with words: it consists above all in the submission of the mind and of the will. . . . In the event of journalists infringing these regulations, and following their personal views (whether they forestall the decision of the Holy See, or prejudice the authority of the bishops, or assume an

[1] "The secular clergy should not publish books, even such as treat of purely natural arts and sciences, without consulting their Ordinary. By so doing they will set an example of obedience towards him. They are equally forbidden to undertake the direction of newspapers or periodicals without the previous consent of the Ordinary."

[2] Encyclical, *Nobilissima Gallorum gens*, February 8, 1884.

[3] Letter, *Epistola tua*, to the Archbishop of Paris, June 17, 1885.

authority to which they have no right), they must remember that they cannot retain the glorious name of Catholic, or further the interests of the sacred and noble cause which they have undertaken to defend and to exalt."[1] Catholic journalists should strive never to deserve the serious reproach "of attacking one another in their newspapers by daily and public abuse; of interpreting in their own fashion the clear documents in which ecclesiastical authority may have blamed their manner of acting; of always astutely putting off their submission to these grave admonitions; finally, of refusing their confidence to their own pastors, and while obedient in words, in point of fact despising their authority and guidance."[2]

III. When Christian democrats treat specially of questions concerning religion, Christian morality, and natural ethics, they are subject to the previous censorship of the Ordinary, according to Art. 41 of the Apostolic Constitution *Officiorum*.[3]

Ecclesiastics must also, in accordance with the regulations of Art. 42 of the same Constitution quoted above, obtain the previous consent of the Ordinary even for the publication of writings of a purely technical character.

IV. In the foundation of Circles, Societies, &c., the following points should be carefully observed: (1) Their rules, prospectuses, manuals, and other documents must be clearly Christian in their wording and spirit. (2) Their banners and other insignia must have nothing in common with those of Socialistic origin.

[1] Letter, *Est sane molestum*, to the Archbishop of Tours, December 17, 1888.

[2] Letter, *Cum huic*, to the Bishop of Urgel, March 20, 1893.

[3] "All the faithful are bound previously to submit to ecclesiastical censorship those books at least which treat the Sacred Scriptures, Theology, Church History, Canon Law, Natural Theology, Ethics, and other religious or moral sciences of a similar kind, and in general all writings which deal specially with religion and morals."

(3) Their statutes and rules must be previously examined and approved by the Ordinary ; without such approbation, none of these institutions may call themselves or be considered Catholic institutions, worthy of the confidence of the clergy and of the laity. (4) All their documents and addresses must be full of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Before all things they will have the kingdom of God for their aim, they will effectively promote the temporal welfare of working people and of the poor, and also the progress of Christian civilization. In all the matters requiring the previous sanction or permission of ecclesiastical authority, due notice must be given to allow time for the consideration of the measures and precautions which may be needed. To sum up : the Holy See wishes—and the very idea of the ecclesiastical hierarchy demands—that the Catholic laity should not go before, but should follow, their pastors, who, on their part, will not fail to promote with earnestness and particular care Christian popular action—so necessary in these days, and so frequently recommended by the Holy Father.

V. Subscriptions and collections for Christian social and democratic objects are subject to the authority and supervision of the Ordinary. As in certain circumstances and in particular cases such collections might become a cause of trouble or unrest in seminaries and other schools subject to the Ordinary, and even in the houses and colleges of religious, their directors must not allow any of these collections or subscriptions to be made without the previous and express consent of their Bishop or of their respective religious superior.

VI. No journal, even though Catholic and an organ of Christian popular action, may be introduced into seminaries, colleges, and schools dependent on ecclesiastical authority, without the express permission of their immediate superiors. These superiors are strictly bound to obtain the authorization of their Bishop for

each newspaper and review. As a general rule, it is not desirable that the time destined for ecclesiastical training and study should be spent in reading newspapers, particularly those which demand in their readers the safeguards of experience and a spirit of Christian piety. The Superiors of Orders and of Congregations must not forget these rules, and must see that they are observed in their religious families.

VII. As conferences on Christian democracy must often, both as to form and substance, be a defence of Catholic doctrine against Socialistic errors, they require serious study and considerable tact. No priest, therefore, nor cleric may give a conference without the permission of the Ordinary. The following rules on preaching, from the Instruction of the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars, July 31, 1894, apply to these Conferences: "In the case of priests of their own diocese, the Bishops will never entrust to them so august a ministry without having tested them by examination or some other suitable method: *Nisi prius de vita et scientia et moribus probati fuerint.*[1] When it is a question of priests from another diocese, they will not allow them to preach, especially on more solemn occasions, unless they bring letters from their own bishop or from their own religious superior, testifying to their good conduct and capacity for this office. Religious superiors of whatever Order, Society, or Congregation, will not allow any of their subjects to preach, and still less will they present them with testimonials to the Ordinaries, before being thoroughly convinced of their good behaviour, and of their competence in preaching the Word of God. If, however, the Ordinaries, after having accepted a preacher with satisfactory testimonials, should subsequently find that he has departed from the rules and recommendations given in this letter, they will promptly recall him to a sense

[1] Conc. Trid. Sess. V. Cap. II. De Reform.

of his duty by a suitable admonition ; should this not suffice, let them withdraw him from his charge, and even use canonical penalties should the circumstances of the case require it." The reason of these precautions is clearly indicated in the same document in the following terms : "Conferences which aim at defending religion from the attacks of its enemies are necessary from time to time. Still, they are not a task suitable for all, but only for the strongest, and even the most skilful orators are bound to use great prudence in this respect. Apologetic discourses of this nature should only be delivered when, place, time, and audience being considered, there is a real need of them, and when real profit may be hoped from them. Of the existence of these circumstances the Ordinaries are obviously the most competent judges. Conferences of the kind referred to must be constructed in such a manner that the argument is based upon sacred doctrine rather than upon purely natural reason. They should be drawn up with such clearness and solidity as to avoid the danger of leaving some minds more impressed by the objections than by the answers."

In order that these rules may be the better observed, no priest or cleric may take part in any gathering which is not subject to the pastoral vigilance and control of the Bishop.

VIII. Since Socialistic doctrines, taken as a whole, contain undoubted heresies, public discussion with Socialists falls under the decrees of the Holy See with reference to public discussions with heretics. The decree of the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda, of February 7, 1645, thus sums up the legislation which is always in force on this point :—

"1. Public conferences and discussions between Catholics and heretics are allowable whenever it is hoped they will produce a greater good, and when

they are accompanied by certain other circumstances, mentioned by theologians : as, for example, the discussions held by St. Augustine with the Donatists and other heretics.

"2. The Holy See and the Roman Pontiffs, seeing that these discussions, conferences, and meetings often produced no fruit, or had even an undesirable result, have frequently forbidden them, and ordered ecclesiastical superiors to try to suppress them ; and when that is impossible, to see at least that they shall not take place without the consent of apostolic authority, and to arrange that the orators shall be persons capable of vindicating Christian truth." On many occasions the Sacred Congregation of Propaganda has given the self-same orders in writing to missionaries, enjoining them not to enter into public discussions with heretics.

One of the reasons of the Holy See for forbidding these public debates is pointed out in another decree, dated March 8, 1625, in words which are but too true at the present day : "Because it often happens that, either on account of clap-trap eloquence, or the overbearing manner of the speaker, or the character of the audience, error triumphs over the truth."

IX. Some writings and speeches have not unfrequently been marred by inaccuracies and by a tone ill suited to the moderation and charity of a Christian. Consequently, Catholics who wish to merit the blessing of God and the confidence of ecclesiastical authority, will allow themselves to be guided by the following principles :—

(*a*) Christian democratic action must not be looked upon as something new. It is as old as the precepts and teachings of the gospel. Jesus Christ ennobled poverty, and imposed on the rich grave duties with regard to the poor and to the working class. "It was necessary to draw the two classes together, to establish a religious and indissoluble bond between them. This

was the work of charity. It created a social tie, giving it a strength and sweetness unknown before. It discovered, by multiplying itself, a remedy for every ill, a consolation for every sorrow, and by its innumerable works and institutions, enkindled a noble emulation in zeal, generosity, and self-denial" (*Discourse of the Holy Father to French Working Men*, October 30, 1889).

"Always and at all times, We are pleased to repeat it here, the Church has been preoccupied with a jealous care for the lot of the poor and the working classes. . . . When her words were listened to and obeyed by the nations, when her liberty of action was less hampered, and she had at her disposal more ample resources, the Church came to the aid of the poor and of the working class, not alone with charitable gifts, but also by raising up and promoting the great Associations called Guilds, which contributed so largely to the progress of the arts and crafts by obtaining for the workmen themselves an improvement in their economic condition, and a greater well-being. What the Church has taught and put into practice in former times, she still proclaims and seeks to realize in these latter days."[1]

Holy Church may justly boast of having ever been the promoter of all those sociological studies which some would wish to represent as new. "It is the glory of the Church to have perfected the science of Law; it can never be denied that, by her teaching, her example, and her institutions, she has greatly contributed to the solution of the complex problems over which specialists in economic and social sciences spend so much time and labour."

(*b*) It must be remembered how absolutely repugnant to the true spirit of charity, and consequently even to

[1] Discourse of the Holy Father to French working men, October 18, 1887.

[2] *Motu proprio, Ut mysticam sponsam Christi*, March 14, 1891.

Christian democracy, is the use of any language which might inspire the people with aversion towards the upper classes of society. Jesus Christ desired to unite all men in the bonds of charity, which is the perfection of justice, so that, animated by mutual love, they may work for each other's good. On this duty of mutual help which rests with all classes of society, listen to the teachings of the Sovereign Pontiff in the Encyclical *Graves de Communi* :—

"Christian democracy must repudiate the other ground of offence, which arises from paying so much regard to the interests of the lower classes as to seem to pass over the higher, which nevertheless are of no less importance to the preservation and development of the State. . . . Wherefore, because of the natural co-ordination of the common people with the other ranks of society, which is made more intimate by the law of Christian brotherhood, it surely follows that whatever diligence is bestowed upon assisting the common people must extend to these other classes—the more because it is clearly proper and even necessary, if the work is to be successful, that they should be invited to take part in it" (pp. 271–72). . . . "In especial, the kind assistance is to be invited of those whose rank and wealth and superior culture carry with them more influence in the State. If this assistance is not given, scarcely anything can be effected of real avail towards the improvement which it is sought to introduce in the life of the people. Doubtless, the path of improvement is better assured and more quickly traversed, the more we have the co-operation of leading men, with their wide opportunities of effectual aid" (p. 278).

(*c*) It would be most unjust to represent those Associations and Catholic works which have existed for some time, as having done but little for Christian popular action. On the contrary, when the Congregations were condemned the Holy Father spoke of them in

terms of high praise to the Bishops, the clergy, and also to the institutions themselves at the time they were being attacked : " By your generous efforts, Venerable Brethren, and by those of the clergy and faithful under your charge, gratifying results have been obtained, which seemed to foreshadow still more satisfactory results in the near future. Hundreds of Associations and Committees arose in different provinces of Italy. Their unwearied zeal provided rural banks, economic stores, night-shelters, circles for holiday recreation, catechism classes, societies for helping the sick or for protecting widows and orphans as well as many other benevolent institutions." [1]

(*d*) Catholic publications could not be approved which, with an unhealthy craving for novelty, scoffed at the piety of the faithful, and proposed a new direction of Christian efforts, a new policy for the Church, new aspirations for the modern mind, a new social vocation for the clergy, a new Christian civilization, &c. To avoid any such dangerous tendency, all Catholics will remember and apply to their own case the serious warnings given by the Holy Father to the French clergy : " There are no doubt advantageous novelties, well fitted to advance the Kingdom of God in souls and in society. But the gospel tells us,[2] it is the *householder*, and not the children or servants, who has authority to examine them, and if he thinks fit, to admit them to a place beside the old and venerable customs which form the other part of his treasure." [3]

It is well known that " the Church has always been accustomed to moderate her discipline in such a way that, the rights of God being secured, the customs and ways of thinking of the various nations which she embraces have never been neglected. And who doubts that she will continue to do so, when-

[1] Enc. *Spesse volte*, August 5, 1898.
[2] Matt. xiii 52.
[3] Enc. *Depuis le jour*, September 8, 1899.

ever the salvation of souls demands it? But such cases are not to be determined by the judgement of private persons who are liable to be deceived by an appearance of right. The judgement must be left to the Church, and in that all must acquiesce who would avoid the reproach of Our Predecessor, Pius VI, who declared that the 78th proposition of the Council of Pistoia was 'injurious to the Church and to the Spirit of God, in that it submitted to examination the discipline established and approved by the Church, as if the Church could establish a discipline either useless or too heavy for Christian liberty to support.' . . .

"Of grave danger and detriment to the discipline and doctrine of the Church is the opinion of those partizans of every novelty, who maintain that a certain liberty should be introduced into the Church, so that, the vigilance and authority of the ruling power being in a way limited, the faithful might be allowed to act somewhat more in accordance with their own feelings and inclinations." [1]

(*e*) Priests, and especially the younger clergy, ought, yet more than the laity, to have a horror of this spirit of novelty; and although it be very desirable for them to go among the people, conformably to the wish of the Holy Father, they must nevertheless act with the necessary subordination to their ecclesiastical superiors, thus putting in practice the very important cautions given by the august Pontiff even to those who have already justly deserved praise for their great activity and spirit of sacrifice in Christian popular action: "We know well, and the whole world likewise knows, the qualities which distinguish you. There is not a good work of which you are not the inspirers or the apostles. Obedient to the advice given in Our Encyclical *Rerum*

[1] Letter, *Testem benevolentiae* to the Cardinal Archbishop of Baltimore January 22, 1899.

Novarum, you go among the people, the working men, and the poor. You seek by every means to help them, to improve their morals, and to render their lot less hard. To this end you arrange meetings and congresses; you found patronages, circles, rural banks, offices for helping and finding employment for the working class. You labour to introduce reforms into the economic and social order, and for so difficult a task you do not hesitate to make considerable sacrifices of time and money. For the same purpose you write books and articles in newspapers and periodicals. All these things are in themselves very praiseworthy, and you thereby give evidence of your good will, and your intelligent and generous devotion to the pressing needs of modern society, and of souls. At the same time, dearest sons, we deem it Our duty paternally to call your attention to some fundamental principles, to which you will not fail to conform if you wish your action to be really fruitful. Remember before everything, that to be profitable for good and worthy of praise, zeal must be 'accompanied by discretion, uprightness, and purity.' Thus speaks the grave and judicious Thomas à Kempis. . . . But discretion in good works and in the choice of means is so much the more indispensable, because the present times are full of trouble and crowded with difficulties. An act, a measure, a zealous practice, may be excellent in itself, but in certain circumstances will only produce unfortunate results. Priests will avoid this difficulty and misfortune if, before and while acting, they conform themselves to established order and to the rules of discipline. Thus, ecclesiastical discipline requires union among the different members of the hierarchy, respect and obedience from inferiors to superiors. . . .

"If, then, dear sons, as is certainly your case, you wish the victory to be for God and His Church, in the terrible warfare which is being waged by anti-Christian

sects and the powers of darkness, it is absolutely necessary that you should all fight together, in perfect order and with exact discipline, under the command of your hierarchical leaders. Do not listen to those dangerous men who, calling themselves Christians and Catholics, scatter cockle in the Lord's field and sow division in His Church by attacking, and often even by calumniating Bishops 'placed by the Holy Ghost to rule the Church of God.'[1] Do not read their pamphlets nor their newspapers. A good priest should in no way countenance their ideas, nor the license of their language. Can he ever forget that on the day of his ordination he solemnly promised, at the holy altar, *obedience and reverence* to his Bishops? Above all, dear sons, remember that the indispensable condition of true priestly zeal, and the best pledge of success in the works to which hierarchical obedience may commit you, are purity and holiness of life."[2]

(*f*) Similarly, when priests engage in Christian popular action, let them do so with dignity, and without detriment to that ecclesiastical spirit from which come all their prestige and their strength. The teaching and decrees of the Council of Trent as to the life and conduct of the clergy are even more necessary now than in the past. "These recommendations of the Holy Council," said the Holy Father in the letter to the French clergy quoted above, "that we wish, dear sons, to engrave on your hearts, would certainly not be followed by priests who in their preaching were to adopt a style little in harmony with the dignity of the priesthood, and the holiness of the Word of God; who should assist at public meetings where their presence would but excite the bitter feelings of their opponents and of the enemies of the Church, and where moreover they would expose themselves to gross

[1] Acts xx 28.

[2] Letter to the French clergy, September 8, 1899.

insults without profit to any one, and to the amazement, not to say scandal, of the pious laity ; and who should adopt the style, conduct, and tone of the laity. The salt must of course be mingled with the mass to preserve it from corruption ; but at the same time it must itself be preserved from corruption, under pain of losing all savour, and of being good for nothing but to be cast forth and trodden under foot.[1] In a similar manner the priest, the salt of the earth, must in his necessary intercourse with society, preserve decorum, gravity, and holiness in his bearing, actions, and words ; nor must he allow himself to be infected by the frivolity, dissipation, or vanity of the worldly-minded."

In sending the present Instruction to the Right Reverend Ordinaries of Italy, his Holiness is confident that if all work together in Christian popular action, the older by their experience, and the younger with their holy enthusiasm, those salutary results of peace and harmony will be obtained which his Holiness has so much at heart, as He again repeated in the Brief addressed to the Congress of Taranto in August, 1901, and in the discourse spoken to the Sacred College on December 23rd of the same year. "We invite," said the Holy Father, "the help and harmonious co-operation of all good hearts. Let us have the young with the energy and activity of their age ; let us have those of riper years, and let them bring confidently besides their faithful allegiance the prudence and sagacity they have acquired by long experience. The object we have in view is one and the same for all. Equally ardent should be the zeal of all. There should be no mistrust, but mutual confidence ; no unkindly criticism, but Christian forbearance ; no coldness, but fraternal charity."

M. CARD. RAMPOLLA.

ROME, *January* 27, 1902.

[1] Matt. v 13.

II

1. The Church and the Working Class.

The following passage is taken from the address delivered by Pope Leo XIII to a pilgrimage of French workmen whom he received in Rome on October 18, 1887:—

"Always and at all times, We are pleased to repeat it here, the Church has been preoccupied with a jealous care for the lot of the poor and the working classes. She has, by the preaching of the doctrines of which she is the faithful depositary, ennobled labour by elevating it to the level of human liberty and human dignity; she has rendered it meritorious before God by teaching the worker to sanctify it by supernatural views, and to bear with resignation and in a spirit of penance the privations and fatigues which it entails upon him. The Church, on the other hand, has ever recalled to the rich and powerful the obligation which is incumbent upon them to succour their brethren who are in a more humble condition, and to respect in them their character of men and Christians. . . . She will continue to concern herself with you, dear sons, with your true interests and with your legitimate claims. From the commencement of Our Pontificate, We Ourselves had you in Our thoughts when we were recalling to the mind of the nations the fundamental principles of the social order. Since then We have followed with attention the labours of the congresses successively held in France, Italy, Germany, and recently in Belgium and in Switzerland, and We shall not cease to do all that Our office and Our paternal heart can suggest for the amelioration of your lot."[1]

[1] *Works of Leo XIII*, vol. iii pp. 13–15.

2. St. Joseph the Pattern of the Workman.

The following passage is taken from Leo XIII's Encyclical letter of August 15, 1889, exhorting the faithful to invoke the aid of St. Joseph :—

"The people, workmen, all those of humbler fortune, should have recourse to St. Joseph, and seek in him something which they may imitate. For though he was of Royal blood, joined by marriage bond with the holiest and highest of all women, and regarded as the father of the Son of God, he yet spent his life in labour and provided by his own hands and humble calling whatever was needed for the support of his family. Therefore the condition of the poor, if we have regard to the truth, is not degraded. Not only is all labour of working men free from dishonour, but if associated with a virtuous life it may be greatly ennobled. St. Joseph, content with what he possessed, little as it was, bore with quiet and noble resignation the privations necessarily entailed by his slender worldly resources : bore them, that is, after the example of his Son, Who, having assumed the form of a servant though He was Lord of all, voluntarily accepted the utmost poverty and want."[1]

3. Religion and the Toilers.

On October 30, 1889, Leo XIII received in audience a number of French workmen who had come on a pilgrimage to Rome. In the course of his address, in which the Holy Father insisted that it was from religion that a remedy for social troubles must be sought, he said :—

"It is religion alone which can awake in your souls an immortal hope. Religion alone can ennoble your

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. iii pp. 275-76.

labour by raising it to the level of human dignity and liberty. . . . Paganism, as you know, claimed to have solved the social problem by robbing the weaker part of humanity of its rights, by stifling its aspirations, by paralyzing its faculties both intellectual and moral, by reducing it to a state of absolute impotence. This was slavery.

"Christianity came to make known to the world that the whole human family, without distinction of nobility or people, was summoned to enter upon its share in the divine heritage. It proclaimed that all were by an equal title sons of the Heavenly Father, redeemed at the same price. It taught that upon this earth labour was the natural condition of man, that to accept it with courage was for him an honour and a proof of wisdom ; that to wish to evade it was both to exhibit cowardice and to betray a sacred and fundamental duty.

"In order still more effectively to strengthen the workers and the poor, the Divine Founder of Christianity condescended to combine example with teaching. He had not where to lay His head. He suffered the pangs of hunger and thirst. He spent His life, both public and private, amid fatigue, anguish, and suffering. According to His doctrine, the rich man, as Tertullian expresses it, is created to be God's treasurer upon earth. To him are addressed the warnings as to the good use of temporal goods ; against him the dire threats of our Saviour should he harden his heart against the poor and unfortunate !

"But all this was not enough. It was necessary to bring the two classes together, to establish between them a religious and indissoluble bond. That was the task of charity. She created this social tie and gave to it a strength and sweetness unknown before. She discovered as she enlarged her sphere a remedy for all evils, a consolation for all sorrows. And she

knew how, by means of her works and institutions without number, to excite a noble rivalry of zeal, generosity, and self-denial on behalf of the distressed.

"Such, in the inevitable inequality of human conditions, was the only solution capable of securing to every one an endurable existence. For centuries this solution was universally accepted and acted on by all. No doubt acts of revolt and insubordination have been witnessed, but they were only partial and circumscribed. The roots of faith were too deep to permit of a general and definite eclipse. No one would have then ventured to question the legitimacy of that social basis; no one would have dared to harbour the vast project of perverting, on this point, the spirit and the heart of the people, and seek the total ruin of society. What were the fatal doctrines and events which, later on, shattered the social edifice raised with so much patience by the Church? We have explained this elsewhere; We do not wish to return to it here. What We ask is that that edifice should be re-established by a return to the doctrines and the spirit of Christianity; by reviving, in effect at least, in their manifold and beneficent influence, and in such forms as the new conditions of the age will permit, those guilds of crafts and trades which, formerly, moulded by the Christian ideal and inspired by the maternal care of the Church, provided for the material and religious needs of the workmen, helped them to find work, took charge of their savings and economies, defended their rights, and supported, within the requisite limits, their legitimate claims. What We ask is that, by a sincere return to Christian principles, there should be re-established and consolidated between employer and employed, between capital and labour, that harmony and that union which are the sole safeguard of their reciprocal

interests, and on which depend at the same time private well-being and public peace and tranquillity.

"Around you, dear sons, are thousands of other workers in a state of agitation, who, seduced by false doctrines, imagine that they can find a remedy for their evils in the overthrow of that which constitutes, as it were, the very essence of political and civil society, in the destruction and annihilation of property. Vain illusions! They will come into collision with immutable laws which nothing can suppress. They will stain with blood the roads over which they pass, encumber them with ruins, and spread discord and disorder; but in so doing they will only aggravate their own miseries and draw upon themselves the maledictions of honest people. No; the remedy is not to be found in the projects and perverse and subversive agitations of the one side nor in the seductive but erroneous theories of the other. It is to be found wholly in the faithful accomplishment of the duties which are incumbent upon all classes of society, in the respect and maintenance of the functions and attributes proper to each one of them in particular. These truths and these duties it is the mission of the Church to proclaim aloud and to inculcate upon all.

"The governing classes should possess sympathy and compassion for those who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. They should restrain the insatiable desire for wealth, luxury, and pleasure, which, below as above, is unceasingly spreading farther and farther. In every grade, in fact, there is a craving for enjoyments; and as it is not given to all to be able to satisfy it, there results a widespread restlessness and discontent, which will have for their result permanent revolt and insurrection.

"It is incumbent before all things upon those in power to be penetrated with this truth: that to

conjure the peril which threatens society neither human laws, nor repression by judges, nor the arms of soldiers will suffice. That which is required above all, that which is indispensable, is that the Church should be left at liberty to revive in souls the divine precepts, and to extend her salutary influence over all classes of society. By means of wise and equitable regulations and measures the interests of the labouring classes are guaranteed; youth, the weakness of woman and her wholly domestic mission, the right and duty of Sunday rest, are protected; and thus are promoted, both in the family and in the individual, purity of manners and the habits of an orderly and Christian life. Public welfare no less than justice and natural right demand that so this should be.

"Employers are enjoined to look upon the workman as a brother, to sweeten his lot as far as possible, and, by equitable conditions, to watch over his interests both spiritual and corporal, to edify him by the good example of a Christian life, and above all never, with regard to him or his injury, to depart from the rules of equity and justice, in seeking for quick and disproportionate profits and gains."[1]

4. A Christian Democracy.

Addressing another group of French workmen whom he received on October 8, 1898, his Holiness in the course of his speech said :—

"As regards yourselves, very dear sons, who are the France of labour, you are not unaware that upon you also are incumbent grave and important duties, which concern the whole of society. And since you have just made allusion to the democracy, this is what I must impress upon you with regard to that

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. iii pp. 280–84.

subject. If the democracy derives its inspiration from the teachings of reason illuminated by faith; if, being on its guard against fallacious and subversive theories, it accepts with religious resignation and as a matter of necessity the diversity of classes and conditions; if, in the search for possible solutions of the numerous social problems which present themselves daily, it never loses sight for an instant of the rules of that superhuman charity which Jesus Christ has declared to be the characteristic mark of His followers; if, in a word, the democracy desires to be Christian, it will give to your country a future of peace, of prosperity, and of happiness. If, on the contrary, it surrenders to the revolution and to socialism; if, deceived by foolish illusions, it yields to demands which are destructive of the fundamental laws upon which the whole civil order rests, the immediate effect for the working class itself will be servitude, misery, and ruin. Far be from you, very dear sons, a prospect so dark as this! Faithful to your baptismal vow, it is by the light of the faith that you judge and appreciate the things of this life, a true pilgrimage from time to eternity. While elsewhere social questions trouble and torment the men of toil, you will possess your soul in peace, confiding in those Christian employers who direct your labours with so much wisdom, provide your wages with so much justice and equity, and at the same time instruct you in your rights and duties by explaining to you the great and salutary teachings of the Church and of her Head."[1]

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. vii p. 197.

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A CATHOLIC SOCIAL CATECHISM

INTRODUCTION

THE following pages aim at presenting a brief summary, not a detailed exposition, of Catholic teaching on modern social conditions. They deal only with the general symptoms of the disease and the root principles of the remedy. But the disease is so acute and the non-Catholic remedies advocated are often so plausible and so mischievous that all true Christians, in virtue of their faith, must try to realize what is wrong and bestir themselves to right it in the only effectual way. Our modern civilization, although originally inspired by Christianity, is now infected with un-Christian elements. The grinding of the faces of the poor, the "sweated" labour of women and children, the denial of real religious education to the young, the degrading conditions of slum-life, the callous selfishness of many capitalists, the abuse of riches in mere pleasure-seeking, the unfair incidence of what should be common burdens, the tax which unjust rent-contracts lay on the thrift and industry of tenants, the curse of chronic unemployment, the encouragement of the vice of intemperance and gambling, the "social evil" of our streets, the falsehood and immorality that degrade the Press—all these and other forms of hardship and injustice and lawlessness, which

form the theme of socialist denunciation, call for a still sterner condemnation from those who profess the faith of a Christian. It is our business, or rather our privilege, to bring back Society to those Christian principles of justice and charity which alone can heal its wounds. Ardent reformers, full of a just indignation against injustice and oppression, abuse of privilege and idle luxury, are loudly advocating their various panaceas. Socialism holds up materialistic Utopias to captivate the imaginations of the poor and wretched. It is our duty to lead them back to the Divine Physician who promises to refresh them and give peace to their souls. The remedy of Christianity, once so effective to sweeten the lot of the toiler and the afflicted, has never really been applied to modern social conditions as a whole. It is for Christians to apply it, on the lines suggested in this short Catechism.

I. The Patient.

TEACHER: *What do you mean by the Social Problem?*

SCHOLAR: I mean that Society is very ill and must be cured.

But what do you mean by Society?

I mean all the men, women, and children of a country united under one government and meant to work together and help each other to lead full and happy human lives.

So by Society you do not mean the "fashionable society" or "smart set" that we read about in the newspapers?

No, I mean everybody. We are all citizens or members of Society and have all an interest in the common welfare.

But you say Society is very ill. Are we all very ill?

No, we are not all very ill, but the Society to which we all belong is very ill.

But is Society like a person in that it can be ill?

Yes, Society is something like a person. It consists of many parts or organs working together.

What are these parts or organs of Society?

They are the different classes of Society—rich and poor, employers and employed, rulers and subjects.

Why then is Society ill?

Because these different classes do not work together for the common good. When one part of our body does not work well with the rest, we say that we are ill.

But I thought all men were equal: if they differ, as the parts of our body differ, they are not all equal. Can you explain this?

When we say that all men are equal, we mean that all men are God's children and were created for the same end. But they differ from each other in so far as they have different gifts and do different work.

How do we know that men differ in gifts?

Because we see it. Some men are strong and can work well with their arms, others are good at organizing, others at inventing. We are not all fit for the same work.

Is it a good thing that men should differ like this?

Yes, for otherwise Society could not get on. Society needs what is called the "division of labour."

Did God mean any of us to be idle?

No, we all have our work to do in Society, for we are all members of Society. Just as all our limbs are of some use to us, so all members of Society are intended to be a help to Society and not a hindrance.

But what about the idle rich?

Not all rich men are idle; neither are all poor men industrious.

But some rich men are idle?

Yes, but these are neglecting their duty and offending God, who has given them their riches not merely for themselves but for the service of others.

Must we all try to help Society?

Yes, we must all try to help Society and make it better.

How are we to do this?

First of all, by making *ourselves* better. Society is made up of individuals, and, if the individuals are honest and generous and self-controlled, then Society will be healthy.

What else must we do to help Society?

We must use what influence we have to make others better, especially our children and those under our care.

Have we special duties as members of Society?

Yes, and we must discharge them as well as we can. If we have a vote we must take care to use it well. We must also respect the rights of others and avoid class-hatred.

But do we live merely for Society? Is the whole object of our lives to make Society prosperous?

No, our first object is to obey God's law.

What is His law?

To love Him above all things and our neighbour as ourselves for His sake.

Is there anything in this law which is hurtful to Society?

On the contrary, its universal observance would make Society quite healthy again.

But who made Society? Is it a human invention?

No, it was instituted by God.

How do you show this?

Because God, who has given us work to do, must have given us the means of doing it. Now we cannot do His work unless we live together in Society: therefore God means us to live in Society.

But why cannot a man live by himself and leave Society alone?

Because a man who lived altogether apart from human society would not be able to live properly. He needs the help of others.

Is there another reason for our having to live in Society?

Yes, we need human sympathy and human converse in order that our minds and hearts may develop properly.

Is government a divine institution also?

Yes, government is a divine institution also.

How do you know this?

Because government is necessary for Society. Without government Society would tumble to pieces. We must have law and order and some one to enforce them when necessary.

But how does this show that government is a divine institution?

Because God commands and sanctions all that is absolutely required by our human nature. Now human nature requires Society, and Society requires government; therefore government is from God.

Do you mean to say that the present Prime Minister was directly appointed by Almighty God?

No, that does not follow. I said that government was from God, not this or that particular representative of government. God has left us free to arrange who is to govern.

May there be different forms of government?

Yes; all that God commands is that there be *some* effective and suitable form of government—whether a King or a President or an aristocracy or a democratic parliament.

Do our rulers receive their power from God?

Yes, our rulers receive their power from God, even though we determine who those rulers are to be.

Then we do not give our rulers their power to rule?

Not directly: but in choosing some stable and practical form of government we are, as it were, the agents of God, who ratifies our choice.

Is there, then, a right inherent in the community to change the form of government?

Yes, but only to be exercised in very grave circumstances, whenever, for instance, the existing form ceases to fulfil the end of its existence, viz., the good of the governed.[1]

[1] Pope Leo XIII has clearly laid down the Catholic teaching on this important and delicate matter:—

"Whatever in the State is of chief avail for the common welfare; whatever has been usefully established to curb the license of rulers who are opposed to the true interests of the people, or to keep in check the leading authorities from unwarrantably interfering in municipal or family affairs; whatever tends to uphold the honour, manhood, and equal rights of individual citizens; of all these things, as the monuments of past ages bear witness, the Catholic Church has always been the originator, the promoter, or the guardian."—*The Christian Constitution of States* (Immortale Dei).

"He [St. Paul] openly declares that if laws of men contain injunctions contrary to the eternal law of God, it is not right to obey them. . . .

"There is no doubt but that in the sphere of politics ample matter may exist for legitimate difference of opinion, and that, *the single reserve being made of the rights of justice and truth*, all may strive to bring into actual working the ideas believed likely to be more conducive than others to the general welfare."—"*Christians as Citizens*" (Sapientiæ Christianæ).

Ought rulers to govern for the good of a class?

No, government is for the good of all the people: not for the good of a class, still less for the private advantage of those who rule.

But should rulers take special care to protect and aid the poor and the working classes?

Yes, for otherwise these classes will be unjustly treated, as Pope Leo XIII has explained.[1]

II. The Sickness.

TEACHER: *You say that Society is very ill. What is the matter with it?*

SCHOLAR: The different parts are not doing their work properly. The various classes do not try sufficiently to help each other.

What are the signs of this sickness?

They are many. Capital and Labour, for instance, are often seen to be in conflict instead of in harmony.

How can they be in harmony? Their interests are different.

Their true interests are *not* different: you might as well say that the interests of the brain and the heart are different. They do different things, but both work together for a common good. If they do not work in harmony both will suffer.

"Wherever there exists, or there is reason to fear, an unjust oppression of the people on the one hand, or a deprivation of the liberty of the Church on the other, *it is lawful to seek for such change of government as will bring about due liberty of action.* . . .

"Neither does the Church condemn those who, if it can be done without violation of justice, wish to make their country independent of any foreign or despotic power. Nor does she blame those who wish to assign to the State the power of self-government, and to its citizens the greatest possible measure of prosperity."—*Human Liberty* (Libertas Præstantissimum).

[1] *Rerum Novarum.*

How does this conflict between Capital and Labour show itself?

In many ways. For instance, there is a great deal of "sweating."

What is "sweating"?

"Sweating" is employing people to work and not giving them enough wages for a decent living.

Does the Catholic Church allow "sweating"?

No, the Catholic Church condemns it as cruel and unjust. To defraud labourers of their due wages is a sin "crying to Heaven for vengeance."

Name some other results of the want of harmony between Capital and Labour.

Child labour, unemployment, bad housing, destitution, sinful extravagance.

Are not children protected by law from being put to work?

Yes, but they are not protected sufficiently.

Are there many men out of work?

There are always many men out of work, and this means great misery for their wives and children.

Why are they out of work? Is it through their own fault?

Very often it is not through their own fault but is due to the defects of the present social system.

Are the people who work properly housed?

Very often their homes are not fit to live in, and many have to sleep crowded in a single unhealthy room.

What is destitution?

Being without the necessaries of life or means of obtaining them.

Does God mean any member of Society to be in such a state?

It is contrary to God's will that His children should

lack the means of living, and of loving and serving Him.

What is extravagance?

Wasting the goods of this life on useless or unworthy ends.

Are there any other bad results of our social sickness?

Yes, the worst results of all are the spiritual and moral results.

What are the spiritual and moral results?

One result is that many rich people have become very selfish and think only of making money and enjoying themselves; and many poor people have become very bitter and would like to rob the rich.

Are riches bad for people?

No, not in themselves; if properly used they may do much good. But they are a great danger.

Why are riches a danger?

Because men who are rich easily forget that God has ordered them to use their riches to help others. Rich men often come to look upon their riches as if they were intended for themselves alone.

Is poverty a bad thing?

Poverty is not a bad thing. Christ was poor, and many saints have preferred to live in great poverty. But destitution, which is being without what is necessary for decent living, *is* bad.

Does being poor make a man good?

No, being poor does not in itself make a man good. It removes some temptations which rich men have; but it has other temptations of its own.

Must we try to get rid of extreme poverty or destitution?

Yes, because when people are very poor they may easily give way to sadness and despair, and forget all

about God : and people who are very poor cannot lead a healthy family life.

What do you mean by a healthy family life ?

I mean the life led together by father, mother, and children, when the father gets sufficient wages and spends them on his family, when the parents look after their children and bring them up well, and where there is mutual peace and love.

Is it important that people should lead a healthy family life ?

It is most important : the welfare of the individual and of Society depends upon it.

Why is this healthy family life necessary for the individual ?

Because in the family he gets his earliest training, and this is most important ; and the family is a school of virtues for parents as well as for children.

Why is it necessary for Society ?

Because, as history shows, Society only flourishes where there is a healthy family life.

Mention some of the things which hinder this healthy family life.

Insufficient wages for the father, the continued absence of the mother at work, habits of drink, neglect of parents to bring up their children well, disorder, selfishness.

Must we try to make family life healthy ?

Yes, and first of all by doing our duty in our own family.

Is the modern neglect of family life a great evil ?

Yes, it is one of the great curses of modern Society.

Can the State take the place of the family ?

No, the family comes before the State and is more directly from God. It is the duty of the State to protect

and help the family only when the family cannot help itself.

Mention briefly other symptoms of social disorder.

The intrusion of the State into the religious sphere and its interference with the rights of conscience.

Wherein is this disorder chiefly manifest?

In the attempt made to deprive children of religious education.

III. The Cause of the Malady.

TEACHER: *Why is Society sick?*

SCHOLAR: The chief reason why Society is sick is because men have forgotten God. If men loved God, they would love their fellow men instead of trying to overreach them.

Are all men brothers?

Yes.

What is it that makes all men brothers?

All men are brothers because they are all children of God.

What is it that makes men forget that they are all brothers?

Men forget that they are all brothers because they forget that God is their Father.

And Society is sick because men forget that they are all brothers?

Yes, that is the reason. They forget their common origin and their common destiny, and all that should unite them in mutual love and consideration.

How does this forgetfulness show itself?

Rich people often forget that their wealth is intended by God not merely for their private pleasure but for the good of others. Employers of labour often aim only at increasing their profits and forget their duties to their workmen.

Are the rich alone to blame?

No, others are to blame too. Workmen often squander their wages in drink instead of providing for their families. Servants often neglect their duty and make it impossible for employers to keep them. Mothers often neglect their children, who grow up wild and unruly.

Then, if people were all good Christians these evils would not have arisen?

No; they would not have arisen.

Have politicians neglected their duty too?

Yes, very often.

What was their duty?

It was their duty not only to protect people's rights but to help the poor and the working classes when they could not help themselves.

Why have politicians neglected their duty of protecting the rights of al and of helping the helpless?

Because politicians have neglected the teaching of the Catholic Church.

Does the Church tell rulers to have a special care for the poor?

Yes.

Does the Church herself love and care for the poor?

Yes.

Give an example.

In olden times all working men were slaves: the Church helped much to abolish slavery. She has always been on the side of freedom.

Do we owe our liberties to the Church?

Yes, we owe our liberties to the Church. For instance, great Churchmen, like St. Anselm, St. Thomas of Canterbury and St. Hugh of Lincoln, did much to overthrow the tyranny of the Norman kings.

When England was Catholic did the Church protect men's liberties, provide for the poor, and teach the dignity of labour?

Yes.

Would the poor be oppressed if the Church had her way?

No, the Church regards the oppression of the poor as a deadly sin.

Then Society has become ill because it would not listen to the Church?

Yes, that is the reason. Social evils are mainly due to injustice and want of charity.

Is it true to say that social evils are all the result of machinery and the growth of industry?

No, it is not true. These were only the occasions of the evils, not their causes.

How does an occasion differ from a cause?

The cause is what does the work: the occasion is what gives the cause the opportunity of working. For example: the sun is the *cause* of the room being lightsome: the window is the *occasion.*

IV. The Unqualified Practitioner.

TEACHER: *What is an unqualified Practitioner?*

SCHOLAR: One who plies the art of healing without proper credentials, whether of authority, knowledge, or experience.

Will enthusiasm, self-devotion, good intentions, make up for want of knowledge and skill in the art of healing?

Certainly not.

Are there any unqualified Practitioners prescribing for our social sickness?

Yes, a good many, but perhaps the most prominent are the Socialists.

What remedy do the Socialists propose?

They propose to take away all private capital and give it to the State.

What is Capital?

Capital is the means of making money, or, wealth which is used to produce more wealth.

Then land and machinery are forms of capital?

Yes.

So the Socialists want to take away land and machinery from the people to whom they now belong?

Yes.

Is this unjust?

Yes, this is unjust. If a thing really *belongs* to me other people have no right to take it away.

Why do the Socialists want to take away capital from the people who now own it?

Because they say that the working classes will be better off if capital is made common property.

Is this true?

No. People work harder for what is their own than for what does not belong to them. If all capital belonged to the State there would be a great temptation to idle, and all would suffer.

Would people lose their liberty under Socialism?

Yes, for there would be only one master, the State, and we should feel its interference everywhere. There would be no redress, for the State would be supreme.

But surely the poor are not free now. They have to take what they can get.

At least, they have some liberty. We should try to give them more, not take away the little they have got.

May a Catholic be a Socialist?

No, because as a matter of fact Socialism denies certain Catholic doctrines and, besides, it is an international movement, and its leaders on the Continent are

bitterly hostile to the Catholic Church, not to say to the Christian ideal.

Do Socialists in this country attack the Catholic Church?

Some of them do.

Are all Socialists bad men?

By no means. Many of them are upright and unselfish men who really believe that Socialism would benefit mankind.

Why cannot we join with moderate Socialists?

Because moderate Socialists are directly paving the way for the Extremists. Besides, even moderate Socialists often work on false social principles.

Is it wrong to own capital?

No, it is not wrong to own capital, so long as the capitalist pays fair wages and performs his other duties.

How do you show that it is not wrong to own capital?

Because a man can make capital by saving up, and he has a right to keep and use what he has made. If I make a machine out of my own materials I have a right to keep it. If I improve my own land I have a right to the improvement.

But is it not wrong to make profit?

No, it is not wrong to make profit, so long as we are ready to share what is really superfluous with those who need it.

May the State take part of the profits of capitalists for the common good?

Yes, it is often the duty of the State to do so.

May the State take control of capital itself?

Yes, in cases where such control is for the public welfare, and the previous owners are not treated unjustly.

Can it confiscate all capital and forbid anyone to own capital in future?

No, for this, as we have seen, would be unjust and harmful to Society.

V. The Family Doctor.

TEACHER: *What is the Pope?*

SCHOLAR: The Pope is the head of the Catholic Church and the successor of St. Peter as Bishop of Rome.

What does the Pope do?

He rules and governs the Catholic Church. He is the supreme teacher in matters of faith and morals.

Is the present Pope interested in the social question?

Yes, the Popes have always been interested in the social question.

Why should the Pope be interested in the social question Has it anything to do with faith or morals?

The social question has a great deal to do with morals; that is, with questions of right and wrong.

What is the reason of this?

One reason is because Society is or ought to be based on justice.

What is justice?

It is the giving to every man what is due to him.

But what has this to do with the social question?

The social question has arisen because men do not give to their fellow-men what is due to them.

Give an example.

Men have a right to a living wage and a fair share in the produce of labour.

Do they always get it?

By no means.

Has the Pope a right to speak with authority on the social question?

Certainly he has, and Popes have often done so.

Give an example.

Pope Leo XIII issued many instructions on social questions.

Name one.

The famous letter on *The Condition of the Working Classes.*[1]

So the Pope is an expert on social questions?

Yes; being, as it were, at the focus of the world's religious life, he has exceptional opportunities of knowledge; he is aided moreover by the traditions and the experience of his great office.

Then the Pope is a kind of doctor to Society?

Yes.

We may call him the "Family Doctor" since he has known the patient so long?

Yes, we may call him that.

But why is Society so sick now? Could not the family doctor have prevented it?

He tried to; but the patient would not let him, but wanted to get on without him, and try various quack remedies.

Is the Pope a clever and experienced doctor?

Yes; he has all the wisdom of the Catholic Church behind him.

Does the Catholic Church know what is good for the patient?

Yes, the Catholic Church knows mankind and its ills thoroughly.

[1] Published by C.T.S. 1d.; see also *Pius X on Social Reform*, C.T.S. 1d.; *Rome and the Social Question*, C.T.S. 1d.

VI. The Family Doctor's Remedy.

TEACHER : *What is a prescription ?*

SCHOLAR : A prescription is the advice given by the doctor to a sick man.

Has the Pope given a prescription for sick Society ?

Yes.

Where is such a prescription to be found ?

In Pope Leo's Encyclicals (or public letters), especially that on *The Condition of the Working Classes.*

Why did the Pope write this letter ?

Because he saw that the working classes were being oppressed, treated unjustly, and misled.

When was this letter written ?

In the year 1891.

To whom was it addressed ?

To the whole world.

Has the letter produced any results ?

The letter has produced great results, wherever it has been studied and taken to heart.

Name one country where it has been studied.

It has been much studied in Germany : and the Catholics have helped to pass many laws for the protection of working men in consequence.

Ought it to be studied in England ?

It ought to be studied in England by politicians and by employers and by working men. It would do them all good.

Does the Pope tell rich and poor, capitalists and labourers, to work together in a friendly way to make Society better ?

Yes, he says that Society will never get better so long as there is class conflict.

How can rich and poor be brought together ?

First of all by religion, for religion will remind all classes of their duties to each other.

Should there be a friendly spirit between the different classes of Society?

Yes, and it will grow up if men will remember that they are all children of God, and that this life is only a preparation for a better life to come.

If men forget about the life to come, will they be happy in this life?

No, and they will not let others be happy either.

How is this?

If men think only of this life they will scramble for its good things. Some will get more than they need, others will get pushed aside and not secure enough for decent living.

Will the ones who get more than is good for them be happy?

No, riches alone cannot make us happy. Rich men are often very restless and miserable.

Should we value wealth for its own sake?

No, we should use it as a means to enable ourselves and others to lead healthy and beneficent lives.

Should the rich spend money on themselves alone?

No, they should think of others too; the Church says that they are only stewards of their riches and must use them for the good of others.

Are they bound to do this?

Yes, they are strictly bound to do this. Christ will not receive into Heaven rich men who have not relieved the necessities of others.

Has God a special love for the poor?

Yes, if they bear their poverty patiently for His sake. Christ was poor Himself.

Is it true that the Church tells the poor to be patient

because the Church is in league with rich men and wishes to share their wealth?

No, that is not the reason why the Church tells the poor to be patient. She tells them to be patient because that is the command of Christ, and because their reward will be all the greater hereafter. Like Him she has a special love for the poor and has always protected and aided them.

Does Pope Leo tell us to restore a healthy family life?

Yes, he thinks that is most important.

What then, in short, is the Pope's prescription?

The Pope's prescription is that men should return to a Christian way of living.

Would the poor be better off if this were done?

Very much. As the Pope says, "Christian morality when adequately and completely practised leads of itself to temporal prosperity."

VII. Applying the Remedy.

TEACHER: *Who is to apply this remedy which the Pope has prescribed?*

SCHOLAR: All must help. The Pope calls upon politicians and employers and rich men and working men and clergy and laity.

What does the Pope tell politicians to do?

He tells them to aim at public and private well-being in the laws they make. They must strive to benefit every class, and especially the poor and the working classes.

Why does the Pope say that the working classes should be specially benefited by the laws?

Because, as he says, "Justice demands that they who contribute so largely to the advantage of the community" should themselves "share in the benefits

which they create—that being housed, clothed, and enabled to sustain life, they may find their existence less hard and more endurable."

Will such special consideration for the working classes be harmful to the rest of Society?

No, the Pope says that it will be to the advantage of all: "For it cannot but be good for the commonwealth to shield from misery those on whom it so largely depends."

Should the government forbid excessive hours of labour, dangerous trades, and such-like evils?

Yes, if they cannot otherwise be prevented.

Should the government protect private property?

Yes, for if private property were not secure, Society would be thrown into confusion.

Are there limits to what a government may do?

Yes, it is limited by the rights of the individual and the family.

Name some of the things that a government may not do.

It may not banish religion from the schools, as it has done, to a large extent, in France. It may not prevent men from exercising their religion. It may not undermine the family, by sanctioning or facilitating entire solution of the marriage bond.

What does the Pope tell employers of labour to do?

To give their workmen fair wages, not to overwork them, not to give them work which is harmful to them; to give them opportunities of practising their religion, to protect them from bad influences, to respect them as men and Christians.

Is the employer bound to pay a fair wage?

Yes, he is absolutely bound to pay a fair wage.

But suppose that the workman agrees to take less. Is it then unjust to give him less?

Yes, it is still unjust, if the workman cannot help himself. We may not take advantage of the misfortunes of others.

Should the working classes be encouraged to acquire capital?

Yes, to possess some capital will secure them against want and will give them honest independence and self-respect.

But how are they to acquire capital?

The laws of the land and the action of employers and rich men ought to make it easier for them to acquire capital; and the working men must help themselves by diligence and thrift.

Would it be a good thing if every working man could own his house and garden?

Yes, it would make Society more stable and prosperous.

What does the Pope tell working men to do?

To be honest and upright, to avoid violence, and not to follow those who would mislead them.

Does not the Pope wish working men to defend their rights?

Yes, but he is not afraid to tell them to practise their duties also. Some popular leaders speak only of rights, never of duties.

How does the Pope advise working men to defend their rights?

By means of associations or Trade Unions.

Is the government bound to encourage such Unions?

Yes, unless they are harmful to Society.

If a Trade Union became anti-Christian would it be harmful to Society?

Yes, for it would tend to undermine Society by weakening the moral virtues.

Should Catholic working men take an interest in their Trade Unions?

Yes, they should take care to get good men to represent them who will work for the benefit of their trade and will not try to turn religion out of the schools or to spread Socialism.

Should Catholics join Catholic Federations and other good Catholic associations?

Yes, for in this way alone will they be able to defend their religion from attack and thus do good to Society.

Should Catholics who are wealthy give freely of their wealth for the benefit of others?

Yes, and not only their wealth but their sympathy and personal service.

Has the Catholic body in England done much for the poor?

Yes, it has done very much. Though it is not wealthy as a body it has a wonderful record of good works—homes, orphanages, hospitals, and so on.

Do we owe much to the nuns and other religious, engaged in teaching and works of charity?

Yes, we owe them very much. They have given up their lives to serve their poorer brethren and they have brought help and joy to thousands.

Should Catholics study the Encyclical "On the Condition of the Working Classes"?

Yes, for it will show them how to act so as to cure sick Society.

Is this letter of special interest to working men?

Yes, it is the working man's charter. It shows how he may get protection against injustice and better his condition both spiritually and temporally.

Is it enough to read this letter over once?

No, it should be read often and studied and thougth over.

Why is this

Because it is so full of wisdom and truth that even a clever man cannot take it in all at once. Some of the greatest statesmen have read it again and again.

Can you tell me of any pamphlet that will help me to understand it?

Yes: the edition of the Encyclical published by the Catholic Truth Society, 69 Southwark Bridge Road, S.E., contains an analysis by Mgr. Parkinson which you will find very helpful. The C.T.S. also publishes two other books which will be useful: one is by Cardinal Manning and is called *Pope Leo XIII on Labour*, and costs one penny: the other is by C. S. Devas and is called *Social Questions and the Duties of Catholics;* it costs threepence. The List of Publications of the C.T.S., to be obtained from the same address, will indicate other useful pamphlets containing Catholic teaching on different points of social disorder and social reform.

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CATHOLIC SOCIAL WORK[1]

By Mrs. PHILIP GIBBS

The subject of Catholic social work is one which is attracting considerable attention among Catholics at the present time, and much has already been written about it in the Press and elsewhere. In a short paper like the present I cannot hope to do more than give a general outline of so vast a subject and suggest matter for discussion.

By social work we mean, of course, an endeavour to remedy or prevent social evils, or to promote social well-being. Social evils, as we all know, are physical and moral disorders resulting from the non-observance of those laws of justice and charity which should regulate the life of the community. Are all social evils remediable? Probably not, but it is not for us to settle the limit. We must work as if all were so, for when we cannot effect a permanent cure we can very often alleviate the suffering. Poverty and disease may in a given case be providential, and in every case God can draw spiritual good from physical evil. Nevertheless, we must not allow it to be said that Catholics acquiesce in social evils because those may be used to good ends. We are bound always to combat moral evil, and as for physical, there is a vast amount of it which is connected with the former, either as cause or

[1] A paper read at the Catholic Congress at Leeds, July 30, 1910.

effect, and which, therefore, we should aim at removing, without being afraid of changing the character of life as essentially a time of probation and trial.

It will thus be seen that we are quite at one with those who work as if human perfectibility were possible. We differ only in our motive and to some extent in our methods. With Catholics the remedying of social evils is primarily a means to an end, the end being the realization of such a state of affairs on earth that every individual soul has a fair chance of knowing and serving God and so securing its salvation. Even though our first thought is for the body, it is first only in time: the soul is first in importance. We strive to reach the soul through the body. Catholic social work is founded on the love of souls. It is a larger realization of the idea of charity. It is an intertwining of the corporal works of mercy with the spiritual works. In the endeavour to fulfil the two great precepts of the Gospel, we feed the hungry and clothe the naked, we convert the sinner and comfort the sorrowful.

While we acknowledge that social reform is needed, and further that social reform of some kind or another will assuredly come about, what we have to do is to assure the catholicity of this particular reformation. The need of bettering the condition of the people has long been recognized by every sect in England and by men and women of no sect whatsoever. Christians, Jews, and non-believers are prolific in social organizations with the object of providing, for instance, better housing of the poor, improved hygiene and sanitation, shorter hours of labour, free medical advice, free meals for indigent school-children, and all that humanity seems to demand for the relief of hardship and suffering. They labour diligently to remedy what is on the surface, but they are apt to confuse cause and

effect, they do not always remember that much economic evil is directly due to moral disorder, *i.e.*, to the pursuit of wrong ends or the use of wrong methods. Indeed, they stoutly maintain the opposite. "Feed the people," they say; "make them happy, and they will became moral." That is not the experience of one whose observation goes back through the ages. The Church, at any rate, has never fostered the delusion that ease and comfort and worldly prosperity necessarily conduce to right living. "Seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His justice," she always preaches, and she never tires of repeating the warning of her Founder that the "deceitfulness of riches chokes the word" (Matt. xiii 22). A certain measure of prosperity is of course essential for decent living, but only as a *condition* and not a *cause;* otherwise the well-to-do would also do well, and the only evil-doers be the poor. The Church faces the facts, and knows, for example, that a man in good work, if unsupported by moral considerations, may lose it through drunken habits or dishonesty. The fact, which explains their mistake, is that physical and moral evils are frequently interdependent, and so in trying to effect a remedy we must lose sight of neither. Physical evils such as overcrowding and sweating injure, first of all, bodily health. A sickly population grows up in consequence, with low intellectual power and perverted moral sense. The stunted characters and feeble wills that are thus produced fall an easy prey to moral disorder of every sort. If you try to effect a remedy by merely giving food and clothes, you will only succeed in training an irresponsible and thriftless populace without moral stamina. It is here that religion comes to the rescue by holding out true principles as lifebuoys to a sinking multitude. Only social work on these "true principles," *i.e.*, only

what is, in effect, Catholic social work, can bring about the needful reform.

This being the case, then, it is more than ever urgent that Catholics, to whom the talent of the faith has been entrusted, should wake up and come forward to do the work which only Catholics can do. And for this not only good pious Catholics are needed, who know and do all that pertains to the direct service of God, but men and women, no less good and pious, who have learnt to apply their Catholic principles in detail and who are not afraid to enter the arena of greater or less publicity which nearly all social work entails. Active charity is a duty, especially of the leisured and wealthy. It is not merely a counsel of perfection and therefore optional. Only *practical* Christianity can save the individual or the State. Moreover, if their efforts are to be effectual, they must not act as isolated units or in a haphazard fashion, they must combine and have a plan of concerted action. This, of course, entails a certain amount of acquired knowledge, both theoretical and practical. Sound social judgement does not come by nature. They must use the experience of others and they must systematize their own. They must face a certain amount of study of the social and economic problems of the day and of the economic history of the past. Armed with this experience and possessed of a store of well-digested facts, they can safely join the great army of non-Catholic social workers, bringing the light of their Catholic principles to bear on the solution of all social problems, greater or less. They must learn to work in clubs and on committees, not only of a purely Catholic character, but everywhere where work is being done for the relief of poverty or the spreading of morality in whatever shape or form. Wherever our numbers permit,

Catholic representatives, both men and women, should be found on every "social reform" committee, and this even when we cannot entirely agree with the methods employed or the ideals embodied in their schemes. No Board of Guardians, for instance, should if possible be without a Catholic representative to safeguard the rights of their poor. Yet there are many Unions, which have Irish populations, without Catholic representation, to the manifest detriment of the Faith. Not only may our Guardians see that poor Catholics are treated justly, but they can often by their true grasp of moral principles, tactfully expounded, guide the whole Board to act in accordance with sound morality when perhaps they might unwittingly have erred. And the same applies to all similar bodies in many other instances. Indeed, Catholic representation on all non-sectarian committees for social reform cannot be too strongly urged. Hitherto, and even yet perhaps, great reluctance has been shown on the part of many Catholics to serve with social workers of varying beliefs. The Catholic Women's League is remedying this by getting women to serve on various committees, permanent or otherwise.

It cannot be denied that there are difficulties to be met with, but all who have had the experience will admit that the work is one which amply repays the trouble taken, and that it is very often a means of throwing down the last remains of the barriers created by bigotry against Catholicism. But the point to be emphasized is not the difficulty of the actual work, but rather its impossibility unless the worker has previously formed conceptions of the problems involved and of the solutions proposed by Catholic teaching, and can apply those solutions with tact and an adequate knowledge of economic matters in general.

It will readily be perceived that Catholic social work of this nature must be undertaken chiefly by the laity. Let us return to our great principle that the main work of the Church is to save souls. In the emphatic words of Cardinal Newman :

"She considers the action of this world and the action of the soul simply incommensurate, viewed in their respective spheres: she would rather save the soul of one single wild bandit of Calabria, or whining beggar of Palermo, than draw a hundred lines of railroad through the length and breadth of Italy or carry out a sanitary reform, in its fullest details, in every city of Sicily, except so far as these great national works tended to some spiritual good beyond them."—*Difficulties felt by Anglicans*, Lect. vii. pp. 210, 211.

Now it may be objected that, since the main work of the Church is to save souls, the work of the Church must be done almost exclusively by the clergy. But this objection is groundless, as will be readily perceived. For the work of saving souls is closely bound up with social work, and social work, as has been explained, is work which calls for the co-operation of all. It covers such an immense field that our clergy, already overburdened by their parochial charges, cannot possibly cope with it. They must for the most part be the pilots at the helm, while the laity must do the work of the crew. In pre-Reformation times the taking part in the affairs of the parish was considered a duty incumbent on all parishioners, and there is on every side proof how well this duty was understood and fulfilled.

In modern times the parish has ceased to be the boundary of social activities ; our sympathies are often solicited for the removal of evils all over the world, but it does not follow that our sense of corporate responsibility should be any the less because more widely distributed. If it has been small in the past, that, no doubt, is due to the traditions and habits fostered by

the legal disabilities, penal laws, social ostracism, and other strong deterrents to active citizenship under which Catholics had laboured for so many years.

To-day, urged by our Supreme Pastors, and stimulated by the general movement for social reform, we are, after a long sleep, at last waking up to our responsibilities, and are acquiring that "social sense" which should make us good Catholic citizens. It is true the awakening has been very gradual. Our brethren abroad, where religious questions are more acute, have been keener to realize the opportunity of Catholicism. The masses have asked for bread, and Protestantism and Rationalism have offered them stones. They are now being solicited by Socialism, and Christianity must bestir itself to assert its divine commission to remedy all human ills that are remediable. France, we repeat, and Germany have realized this, but we in England have been slower to comprehend it. Leo XIII's first encyclicals were published in the seventies, and it is nearly twenty years since the celebrated *Rerum Novarum* was issued! Just lately, however, educated Catholics have become more active; attention is being paid to the young, the future leaders of the Church, that they may recognize the *rôle* before them; the old traditions of penal times are slowly dying out, and we are becoming competent to take our proper place in the work of the State.

We must recognize that during our absence from the scene, so to speak, conditions have changed. In the gradual evolution of governments the age of the people, of democracy, has come. In every civilized State the bulk of the citizens claim a share in the supreme power, and the most numerous class has the greatest share. We cannot alter the fact, even if we wished; we must accept it. Democracy has come to stay. If Catholi-

cism is to stay too, the Democracy must be Christian. So long as twelve years ago, speaking at the Catholic Conference at Nottingham, Mr. Charles Devas explained the principle of Christian Democracy, which he affirmed was as old as Christianity and had nothing new about it but its application to new times. In 1901 Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical on Christian Democracy wherein he approved the title and defined the term. And yet even now some Catholics look askance when one talks of Christian Democracy, and think it is Socialism.

But there is a real Socialism here to combat, un-Christian—if not, as abroad, anti-Christian—and Catholics must rouse themselves if they are not to be submerged by a new false religion—the religion of Earth. We cannot rely on other Christian bodies which seem to have no fixed grasp on the elementary ethics of the matter. We cannot rely on the propertied classes, which will go under, as they did at the French Revolution, unless their claims are based on morality. On the Church and on ourselves, as members of the Church, the hope of the future, even the existence of the State, really rests. Let us then clear our minds and strengthen our hands to act.

Perhaps here, for our encouragement, I may be allowed to summarize what is being done by Catholics in the field of social work. We all know, the whole world knows, the splendid fight we have made for the maintenance of religion in our schools, by which we have preserved for our children the priceless moral heritage that is involved in the knowledge and practice of the faith. By it have we not also possibly helped to reform the State? That has been the work of the Catholic body as a whole, clergy and laity combined. But many distinct bodies have been founded or de-

veloped with specific objects. We have, what practically no other religious body in England has, religious houses for men and women of many Orders who give up their whole lives to education, the care of God's poor, or to intercessory prayer. These form the very backbone of our social endeavour. Besides which we have numerous associations and guilds to spread truth and morals and to look after the material needs of the poor. I will mention only some, their names are all so wellknown to you : The Ladies of Charity, the Society for Befriending Girls, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the Catholic Needlework Guild, the League of the Cross, the Guild of Ransom, the Catholic Peace Association, the Catholic Guardians' Association, the Catholic Federation, the Catholic Young Men's Society, the Catholic Students' Society. And there are many others besides. The three which I have the honour of representing here to-day are the Catholic Women's League, the Catholic Social Guild, and the Catholic Truth Society. Clearly some few words about each of them will not be out of place here, for every Catholic should belong to one of these three bodies, and every Catholic social worker to at least two of them. It is the proud privilege of my sex to be able to belong to all three !

Any student of economic history knows that we, practical people though we boast ourselves, have learnt most of our industries from abroad. It seems to be the same as regards social work, for both the Women's League and the Social Guild have their prototypes on the Continent. The Catholic Women's League was first suggested by the *Katholische Frauenbund*, a marvellous league of Catholic women numbering some fifty thousand members, which has worked wonders in Germany. The object of the English

League is to unite Catholic women in a bond of common fellowship for the promotion of religious and intellectual interests and social work. It has only existed three years, yet its branches are spreading all over England. One of its latest extensions has been the establishment of a branch in this very city of Leeds, a branch which, in spite of its youth, has materially helped the organization of the first British Catholic Congress. The League is very anxious to promote the sociological training of the younger generation, and has already given two good scholarships tenable at the London School of Economics for this purpose. But, of course, it can only look after the girls. The Social Guild will doubtless come to the help of the boys as well. If we owe the Women's League to Germany, the Social Guild is due probably to the stimulating example of the *Action Populaire* in France. It is not yet a year old, having practically started life at the Catholic Conference at Manchester last September, but it has already justified its existence. Its purpose is to facilitate intercourse between social students and workers, to assist in working out the application of Catholic principles to our actual social conditions, to create a wider interest among Catholics in social questions, and to secure their co-operation in promoting social reform on Catholic lines. This has been effected so far chiefly by the publication of social pamphlets and by the collection of suitable books, which are lent to would-be students or societies trying to promote social study. Courses of lectures have also been given in Birmingham and elsewhere. There remains the work of the Catholic Truth Society, which is becoming yearly more important. For twenty-five years it has devoted itself to the creation of a cheap and good Catholic literature to disseminate among both

Catholics and Protestants. It has succeeded, in spite of a not over large membership and the scarcity of funds to which all Catholic good works are accustomed, far beyond the hopes, I fancy, of its original promoters. The Catholic Truth Society shows its true spirit by lending a helping hand to its younger sister societies, the Women's League and the Social Guild, whenever an opportunity occurs. It has published their pamphlets for them and shared their risks in a truly generous way. In fact, I think I can say more, and that is, that indirectly the Catholic Truth Society has been the cause of the existence of the other two, because for years the Truth Society has been labouring to bring about the birth of that social sense which the Women's League and the Social Guild are more directly concerned in educating and fostering.

This, then, is briefly what has been done.

We have dwelt a little on our achievements with the definite view of encouragement. Encouragement is needed when we contemplate how much remains to be done. The sum of social misery is so vast, the remedies are so partial and tentative. And yet, vast as it is, that remainder can be described in a few words. All the already existing societies need further increased support before they can do all the work they have set themselves to do. Their membership is small in proportion to our numbers. We want to reach all our people, and therefore we want the co-operation of very many more, according to their various talents—some must give their brains, some their strength, some their money, some their prayers. It is the system of co-operation that multiplies the efficiency of comparatively small numbers. As in the old times a man with £100 kept it in his stocking or buried it in the garden till he needed it, so now, with joint stock banks and

limited liability companies in existence, he invests his £100 and derives an income of £3 or £4 per annum. The same principle applies to our capabilities for doing social work. In isolation we are practically useless, for we lack experience, or we do the wrong work or embark on something that is already being done. But if we pool our slender resources and have them directed skilfully, their effect is increased out of all proportion, we each do our share little or big, supply each other's deficiencies, and pull in unison. Co-operation is unity and unity is strength.

I will only add a word to say that the need of a Catholic social literature is being slowly supplied, and as far as it goes is of valuable assistance. But as we want to educate our children in sociology and as we want Catholic colleges and convent schools to take up the teaching of civics and economics we need text-books to offer them. It is true that the Social Guild has published a very useful list of books available for students and for the general reader, but there is not one of them which in itself could be used by a Catholic teacher as a complete text-book for a course of economics. We want a series of elementary primers on economic theory, economic history, local government, and citizenship. It has been said that sociology, with its kindred subjects, is the one topic which has been the most written about, and this statement is probably true. Books, non-Catholic mainly, abound for the student of leisure and education, but not for the beginner at the convent school or Catholic college. The subject is one which should be treated from a Catholic point of view, especially for young people. Of course, adult social workers and older students can study the question from any point of view, and must study it from many points of view. Its importance is very

great, and if anything said to-day could serve to impress on Catholics the real need for study of this question a great step forward would have been taken. It has long been the wish of the Holy See that Catholics should seriously study social questions, for unless they do so they cannot hope to carry out the principles laid down for them in the encyclicals of Pope Leo XIII. The present Holy Father has said that "the social question deserves to have all the Catholic forces applied to it with the greatest energy and constancy." To do this we must give our time and intelligence, to study first and then to action. Unless we do so promptly we shall find ourselves excluded, because incompetent, from any share in the many projects for social reform which are springing up around us. As further incentives to social study we have the motives religion puts before us—love of our neighbour, especially the poor and lowly, and the love of justice which strives to right the wrong. We need also to show our patriotism, our love of our country. Catholics have often been reproached with want of patriotic feeling—of course, through the malice or ignorance of their opponents. The delusion still persists, and there is no better way to disprove it than by giving an example of the opposite virtue. The more therefore we devote ourselves to social work in order to help all our fellow-countrymen, whether Catholics or not, the sooner will this stigma of reproach be removed.

Perhaps it would be useful to point out what may be considered the most salient features of the social programme as laid down by Popes Leo XIII and Pius X. With their teaching before us we have constant guidance in our social work. It might be safely said, "If in doubt as to what plan to pursue, if a

perplexing problem presents itself in your social studies or work, turn over the pages of Pope Leo's encyclicals and you will find an answer to your doubt, a solution to your problem."

To begin with, our motto is—*Justice and Charity*. On these two foundations the whole structure of social action must be built up.

The chief truths which should guide Catholic social work may be summarized as follows :—

First : That the Church, as guardian of the moral law, cannot be subjected to the State in respect of her office. It is her business therefore to define the principles whereby all social endeavour should be actuated.

Second : That class distinctions, springing as they do from inequality of natural endowments, are essential to human society. That such class distinction is necessary for progress and is consistent with individual liberty, that it entails mutual obligations between the classes, who, united by a bond of love, should help one another to attain their final end in heaven and their material and moral well-being on earth.

Third : That the right to ownership and to private property rightfully acquired is in essence inalienable and should be protected by Government.

Fourth : That the State must fully recognize the rights of the family and supplement, not usurp, parental authority or responsibility, except in extreme cases.

Fifth : That social work should be raised above the strife of party politics and should have for its aim the common welfare of all the citizens in the observance of the law.

Sixth and finally: That economic evils are more often than not due to moral disorder, and that therefore there exists ultimately no practical solution of them without religion.

These are the lines on which we have to go. We may have our differences of opinion, our different schools of thought ; we may call ourselves Conservatives, Social Reformers, or Christian Democrats ; we may differ on certain minor points, such as the limits of State intervention, the degree of comfort which is the workman's due, or the respective merits of the Majority and Minority Reports on the Poor Law ; but our principles will ever remain those laid down for us by our faith. With these to guide us we shall work together to *restore all things in Christ.* In the words of the Holy Father, we shall give our support to that "divinely appointed body whose aim is to combat anti-Christian civilization by every just and lawful means and to repair in every way the grievous disorders which flow from it ; to reinstate Jesus Christ in the family, the school, and society ; to re-establish the principle that human authority represents that of God ; to take intimately to heart the interests of the people, especially those of the working and agricultural classes, not only by the inculcation of religion, the only true source of comfort in the sorrows of life, but also by striving to dry their tears, to soothe their sufferings, and by wise measures to improve their economic condition; to endeavour, consequently, to make public laws conformable to justice, to amend or suppress those which are not so ; finally, with a true Catholic spirit to defend and support the rights of God in everything, and the no less sacred rights of the Church."

After all, it is not for us Catholics to assume false modesty. We have in our faith and the grace of the Sacraments the stuff of which martyrs and saints are made and by which great movements in humanity have been actuated and organized. If we co-operated and put

together all the brains, all the activities, all the character of the Catholic men and women in this land, we should have a spiritual and intellectual force which would inspire new life into the social conscience of the nation, quicken the pulse of righteous reform, and raise a flag of victory which should rally to itself a great army of social workers, not only of the Catholic faith, but of all those who are awaiting leadership and inspiration.

Again I say, we Catholics have no need to be in the rearguard. We have got the fighting men and the heroic women. Our history has been a history of courage, of endurance, of audacity, of utter disregard of difficulty, or disappointment, or failure. In times of persecution we have gone gaily on the way to death, and have taught the world the way to live. The age of persecution has gone, we have a peaceful time in a tolerant world, and there is just the danger that our armour may grow rusty and our weapons may grow blunt.

Now then is the time to show ourselves worthy guardians of the inheritance of the faith of our fathers—an inheritance we must pass on, not only undiminished and intact, but enlarged and strengthened, to those who come after us. The time is ripe for action, for organization in social endeavour. The whole world is becoming alive to the need for social reform.

Let us Catholics come forward then and take the place that is ours by right of principle, of reason, and of faith. Let us be the leaders in the great movement, not laggards in the rear. Let us scatter our doctrines broadcast, advocating our principles in season and out of season. Let us not be afraid to advertise our social plan of campaign to the whole world. If we do all this, victory will assuredly be ours, for we are working for a Master who is the Saviour of mankind!

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THE CHURCH AND SOCIAL REFORMERS

By the BISHOP OF NORTHAMPTON

Introductory Note

Crag climbers and other venturesome spirits, knowing the dangers of their enterprise, adopt the precaution of roping themselves together. Implicit obedience to ecclesiastical guidance is the equivalent safeguard for those who attempt the perilous paths of social reform.

To many, the following pages will seem to be wasted on labouring a truism. Everything being for the best in the best of all possible worlds, common sense keeps them in the old ruts, and saves them from tempting Providence by foolhardy adventures. *They* have no fear of incurring the Church's displeasure, regarding Her as part and parcel of the established order of things to which they cling tenaciously.

But new generations are growing up who see, or think they see, that the old paths will not be available much longer ; or, at any rate, that new routes can be constructed with advantage. It is these pioneers that need a warning voice and restraining hand.

Every student of history knows that vast social changes have taken place during the two thousand years of the Christian era, and especially during the last century of that epoch. Unless all the signs are deceptive, we are on the brink of developments still more momentous. The question is not whether social changes shall come. They *have* come, and appear to be gathering volume rather than subsiding. Catholics can no more check their advance than the monarch could forbid the inflowing tide. But Catholics ought to exercise a directing influence, and can do so if we stand shoulder to shoulder and are determined that Christian and not materialistic ideals shall prevail.

The working class have achieved political supremacy, as the leaders of both our great Parties fully recognize. Their next step, apparently, will be towards economic supremacy, by gaining control of all industries. From the Catholic standpoint, the acute danger of the situation arises from the inflamed passions engendered by the strife. Those who have the ear of the working-man, for the moment at least, are misleading him on two fundamental points: First, they set forth material well-being as the beginning and end of all his aspirations, to which every other consideration ought to give way; and secondly, in pursuit of his material well-being they encourage him to discard elementary precepts of justice and charity as between man or man, or class and class.

The difficulty of keeping one's feet in a movement the current of which is so swift and so strong, and the security which attaches to docility, are both illustrated in the varying fortunes of the Sillonist

crusade. Nothing could be more admirable or more infectious than the zeal with which these French gentlemen threw themselves into the struggle to regain for the Church the confidence and allegiance of the workman. With rare devotion of time and talent, they quickly succeeded in enrolling thousands who were willing to seek temporal as well as spiritual prosperity under the banner of Catholicism. Unfortunately zeal overran discretion, and principles were heedlessly adopted pointing to conclusions which must astonish their advocates to-day, as much as, all along, they scared more sober minds. Yet, so practical was their piety and so loyal their submission, that, at the word of the Holy See, they forthwith dissolved their associations, suppressed their journalistic organs, and offered their services to be employed under other leaders in whom the authorities had greater confidence—a magnificent example of the Catholic temper at its best!

The following paper has already been issued as a Pastoral for Advent in 1910. It is offered to the Catholic Social Guild, at their own request, because they think it will be useful to their members, and because the writer has nothing better to give. His keenest interest and most ardent good wishes they have had from the first.

✠ F. W. K.

NORTHAMPTON.
May 15, 1911.

The Social Question.

THE Social Question is the most engrossing of modern problems. Not only is it widely discussed, as it has been often before, but it is reaching a crisis in every European State. We may think it a wearisome subject. We may affect or feel indifference towards it, wrapping ourselves up in our own studies or other pursuits. We may strive to ignore it, but we shall not succeed. "Tua res agitur." It is every man's concern. The unrest of Democracy is so profound that no sort of peace will be restored until social changes have been accepted which will notably modify our own lives and the lives of those who come after us.

The heart of the problem, that which furnishes a theme and a plea to the agitator, is the persistence of abject poverty. The most pressing end to be achieved is to abolish the dreadful scandal of our sunless, godless, and shameless slums; to devise means for reducing to a minimum the dangerous evil of unemployment; to render more endurable the lot of those who are at work by regulating the hours and conditions of labour and its fair remuneration; and to secure reasonable human comfort for the sick, the aged, and the destitute. It ought to be apparent to all how far we are at present from the solution of that problem. It is equally apparent that a solution, a bad solution if not a good one, will speedily be found.

It is not, however, our present purpose to propose solutions, for a constructive social policy has been set forth already by Leo XIII in his great Encyclicals on this subject. Neither do we propose to discuss or criticize rival solutions, advocated by various schools of economists or politicians. We

wish solely to sound a note of warning to those Catholics, whoever they are, who habitually pay too little heed to the voice of the Church, or even resent her interference in matters which they consider outside her domain.

The Plea for Non-Interference

The temptation to assume such an attitude is especially great in our particular circumstances. We Catholics are but a minute fraction of the English population. As a Church we are unpopular and without much influence. Our people are mostly poor. Man *must* live by bread, though not by bread alone. Piety of itself will not keep body and soul together. Sound Faith will not supply the lack of technical skill or business capacity. To earn a decent livelihood a poor man must belong to a Trade Union or similar society for mutual co-operation and protection. He must make common cause with his fellows. He must support the common policy. Naturally he will look for guidance to those who share his lot and have personal experience of his hardships. To the Church he is willing to commit his eternal interests. But why his temporal interests? Why should she seek to control his action outside the sphere of religion? There are Catholic politicians who call themselves Tories or Liberals. Why should not a working-man be a Catholic Socialist if he sees his advantage in Socialism?

We have taken our instance from the occasional complaints of the labouring class because we feel special sympathy with them in what is undoubtedly a difficult position. But like friction not unfrequently is set up elsewhere. One person is smitten

by the new science of Eugenics. Another cannot understand the prohibition of Cremation. Some venture too far even in the good cause of Temperance. Philanthropy itself is not free from snares for the unwary. And when the Church steps in, as she must when her children are in danger, we see immediate signs of irritation. The same grievance is aired, that the Church is passing her proper boundary and is legislating without knowledge.

Competence of Church Authority in Social Questions

An obvious reply is to point out that human life is moral from end to end; that the Church is the arbiter of morals; and that she cannot alter or lower her standard of morality to meet difficulties created by a Protestant or materialistic environment. Yet this is just what the grumblers demand, implicitly at least. Our non-Catholic neighbours, with their loose hold on principle and their infatuation for the facile method of compromise, are an abiding danger to the weak-kneed or ill-constructed Catholic. In his eyes their want of principle assumes an air of broadmindedness, and their readiness to compromise an air of common sense. Manifestly, the least the Church can do without dereliction of duty is to utter her "non possumus" as occasion demands with no uncertain voice.

But this purely negative attitude is far from expressing the whole of the Church's claim. She is not content to be regarded merely as a machine, automatically turning out decrees on dogmatic and moral issues as they arise. She is not *outside*, but very much *inside* the social problem, as her enemies

recognize. She does not live "in the Sacristy" as they would have her live. She lives, as she has always lived, in the life of all nations. She is leading her children to a supernatural end, but her path lies through the thickest of the human throng. She is maturing heirs for heaven; but she finds her candidates among the sons of men, and must perforce rear them amid their actual surroundings. She could not, if she would, remain indifferent to the Social question, or confine her intervention to an occasional prohibition.

The Key of the Position

These considerations furnish the key of the whole position. The salvation of souls is the one paramount aim and work of the Church. To the accomplishment of that work, certain social conditions are harmful or even fatal. Other social conditions, without being inconsistent with its fulfilment, are more or less imperfect, as all human institutions must needs be. What wonder, then, if the same Hand which bestowed upon her the authority and gifts necessary for her supernatural office also assigned to her functions in the social order so far forth as these are requisite for her well-being, which is also the well-being of the human race? Such functions at least she has always claimed to possess. Such functions she has always exercised fruitfully, so far as she was free to exercise them; and her history is there to prove it.

The City of God

Since the hour when the Son of God "emptied Himself," taking the form of a servant, and lived out

a human existence at its hardest to the bitter end, the Social question has never been able to evade His influence. Even the wild theories of to-day shelter themselves under the Name of what Our Holy Father recently called "a disfigured and diminished Christ." How much less could Christians, who know Him to be God, ignore that infinitely gracious Personality, calling to Himself all those that labour and are heavily laden; the Advocate and Comforter of the weak and outcast things of the world; who, being rich, became poor for our sake; who chose for Himself the lot of the working-man; who, in virtue of what He was and how He lived and died, was competent to promulgate, as none but He could promulgate with effect, that "new commandment" of limitless social possibilities—"That you love one another as I have loved you. . . . By this shall all men know that you are My disciples if you have love one for another."

From that seed sprang the City of God on earth; the unsurpassed ideal of a Christian civilization. We recall the first recorded appreciation by pagans of the New Life: "See how these Christians love one another!" As a recuperative force for a sick world, where can we look for anything equal to this? It is true that, during the earliest centuries under the iron heel of persecution, the golden rule of Charity found small scope to exhibit itself as a world-power. Men stoned the prophets, as they always do. Yet, by and by, the day dawned and the City of God rose slowly from its foundations. It rose slowly but surely. Then as now the missionary was the pioneer of civilization, and the Christian State grew up tightly locked to the

Christian Church. It was the bond of a common faith that held together, and thus preserved from destruction the floating embryoes of future nationalities during the precarious years of early growth. It was the solicitude of their common Mother that selected with unerring skill what was fit to survive out of the wreck of imperial institutions and the nobler traditions of barbarous tribes. Her own Divine Constitution was the model, and her Canon Law the norm upon which the early legislators and statesmen worked. Bishops were the counsellors of princes, and high ecclesiastics the patriotic servants of the State. For the fine and the useful arts alike the world is still debtor to the Church. Her quickening spirit brooded over the seething mass of humanity, evolving order out of chaos, civilized life out of barbarism. She consecrated kings; she organized and blessed parliaments; by her sanctions she ratified treaties; she received the vows of chivalry; she enforced the just laws of commercial enterprise; she emancipated the serf; she protected the young from oppression and moral corruption during the years of their apprenticeship. The strong advocate of lawful authority, she was the foe of the tyrant and the champion of the weak. Her hand curbed the ambition of the mighty and soothed the discontent of the lowly. Above all, in the administration of the wealth which her genius and labour had created, she set an example to all times; for, in theory, and in practice too, she held her possessions as great possessions ought to be held —in trust for God's people and especially for God's poor.

It is in view of such facts that Pius X in a recent

Encyclical bids us consider "the forces, knowledge, and supernatural virtue that have been necessary for the establishment of the Christian State." He bids us remember "that the social question and social science were not born yesterday; that at all times the Church and the State, when they worked in harmony, have been able to originate organizations that have proved fruitful; that the Church has never betrayed the happiness of the people by compromising alliances; that she has no call to sever herself from her past, but has only to take up again, with the assistance of loyal workers, the agencies destroyed by the Revolution, and, in the same Christian spirit which inspired them, to adapt them to the new situation created by the material development of contemporary society; for," he adds, "the true friends of the people are neither revolutionaries nor innovators but traditionalists."

No Abdication

No words could define the position more clearly than this weighty pronouncement. We are not discussing the respective rights and duties of the Church and the State. The relation of these two sovereign powers will vary in a Catholic and in a Protestant country; in a country which is professedly Christian and in one which is professedly neutral. But every modern State trims its sails to the breeze of public opinion; and it is in the formation of public opinion that the Church finds her opportunity and also the keenest opposition. "A religion which comes from God approves itself to the conscience of the people wherever it is really known," says Cardinal Newman. It is experience of this fact which so exasperates the

pundits of rationalism and materialism, with their truculent following. They are the real foe, by every unworthy device intent upon one object—to misrepresent and discredit the Church in the People's eyes. Faced by this insurgent mob, the Church refuses point-blank to abdicate from her hereditary position as Queen and Mother of European civilization. She admits that "a new situation" has been created; created partly "by the material development of contemporary society"; modified still more profoundly by the great apostasy of the sixteenth century, culminating in the general uprising at the end of the eighteenth. She admits that much of the old machinery is worn out, or antiquated and unsuited to the times. But the principles of Christian Society are eternal as the principles of all true science. On those principles she expects and requires all her subjects to rally as men of all parties unite in defence of the Constitution and freedom of their Fatherland.

Alleged Failure of Catholicism as a Social Force

It is not to be expected that such claims should pass unchallenged. Nothing indeed is more familiar than the charge that when the Church was in place and power she did nothing for the uplifting of the working class. How unjust and ungrateful such charges are may be gathered from the imperfect outline we have drawn, and is admitted by sober historians. Failures there have been, of course, and partial successes which can be made to look like failures; though nothing to compare in horror with the monstrous and ghastly triumphs of the Revolu-

tion. It must be sorrowfully confessed that human passion acts as a constant drag on the wheels of progress, and, in its worse moments, threatens to wreck the whole social mechanism. But what is this but to acknowledge a primary dogma of the Church ? to acknowledge that in the natural as well as in the supernatural order the beneficent influence from on high is checked or baulked by the bad inheritance of our fallen nature? As surely as instances of failure are candidly examined, so surely do we find that the Church succeeds when she is free, and only fails when she is oppressed and enslaved by the encroachments of earthly power, or invaded by a worldly spirit. Therefore has it become a commonplace of historical observation that the Cause of the Church and the Cause of the People have always stood or fallen together ; and the still deeper truth that they are radically the same.

Practical Conclusions

From such reflections, the duty of a Catholic social worker may be deduced by the strictest logical sequence. Be he a working-man, or an employer, or a landowner, or a philanthropist—a journalist, a lecturer, or a philosophic observer—no Catholic ought to enrol himself under any other banner than the banner of the Church. It is not that the Catholic solution of the problem is as good as any, or even the best of all. The Catholic solution holds the field. For us, at least, there is no other.

The Catholic Social Guild

An outstanding feature of the First Catholic Congress, held at Leeds in 1910, was the place occupied in the programme by the Social question in its various phases. To many it was a revelation, to all a subject of rejoicing, to be brought face to face with so much activity originated and conducted on purely Catholic lines. Called into being here and there by individual zeal and the stress of circumstances, these multiform societies are, as it were, the spontaneous passionate blossoming of Christian love—the good fruit of a good tree. But still greater promise for the future, perhaps, is contained in the formation of the Catholic Social Guild with its affiliated study classes. As yet in its infancy, it is to this movement we look for the more abundant harvest that co-ordination and knowledge yield. The study classes must multiply in numbers and in membership up and down the country. Warned by the mistakes of others, they will carefully cherish their Catholic character as the *raison d'être* of their existence and the vital principle of their utility. Drawing their light from Catholic sources and their energy from fervent religious practice, spurred on to continuous effort by close contact with the sad realities of the world and controlled by ready obedience to authority, they will be able to handle effectively the ever-growing masses of facts and information—statistics, reports, and legislative enactments or proposals. Their sound principles will serve as a touchstone to distinguish true from false, and as a guiding-star enabling them to steer a right course. Already the first-fruits have appeared in an output of literature.

In the immediate future we shall look for the still more precious output of trained workers and capable leaders.

Non-Catholic Movements

But what of non-Catholic movements? Must a loyal Catholic hold aloof? If not, to what extent and under what safeguards may he participate in them?

In many instances our duty is clear. Besides those societies which have fallen directly under the ban of the Church, there are others which are run avowedly on naturalistic lines. However excellent their aim, the methods of these associations are such as no good Catholic can approve; and the unsoundness of their methods foredooms them to ultimate failure. The problem of poverty will never be solved by substituting the worship of Man for the worship of God; nor will the regeneration of Society be accomplished by pandering to the very vices that threaten its ruin pride, covetousness, violence, and love of ease. Between such movements and the religion of the Cross is a gulf fixed. Christ has no part with Belial, even when Belial disguises himself to the eyes of the poor as an angel of light. "Non tali auxilio." A Catholic has nothing to hope for from associations, call them by what name you will, which enter upon their propaganda by proposing "to extinguish the lights of heaven."

But every one knows that there are, in this country, numerous other societies mainly of a philanthropic character, neither originated by the Church nor under her guidance, which, nevertheless, it would be churlish to shun. It is pleasant to be neighbourly with neighbours. It relieves our sense of isolation

to meet non-Catholics and engage with them in enterprises for the public welfare. It is a positive gain to the Church as well as honourable to themselves, when capable Catholics succeed in entering civic or political life and take their share in serving the country. To frown upon such action would be to play into the enemy's hand, and to put on voluntary fetters. All this is true. Still, we must recognize that there is risk even in the most attractive and apparently harmless of such associations. For the sake of the higher good risks must be taken. But the best insurance against risk is a clear consciousness that, outside the shield of the Church, risk there always is—the risk of false ideas only dimly perceived ; the risk of true ideas pushed to extremes ; the risk of compromises which seldom fail to prove compromising ; the perennial risk of becoming entangled in the " non-sectarian " snare.

Our own experience in one great undertaking may well serve to guide us in all. For the past forty years, under the leadership of the Hierarchy, we have been compelled to fight for our Elementary Schools. Self-interest, as well as a common cause, has pushed us into alliances with other religious and political parties. Yet throughout the campaign, though we have always worked loyally hand in hand with our allies, we have never yielded " to flesh and blood " in matter of principle. More than once tempting settlements have been rejected on this very ground. In good report and evil report we have " stuck to our guns " at all costs. The result has been unqualified success. We have beaten off repeated attacks, backed by overwhelming numbers ; we have gained ground ; and we have won the

respect of friend and foe alike. More than this, by dint of insistent argument our very principles have made headway in the country and have been adopted to some extent by our opponents themselves.

Such is the blessing which always rests upon obedience. Right conduct is proved in the long run to be wise and successful conduct. The track of history is strewn with the whitened bones of too venturesome battalions who, breaking the bounds of discipline, have paid away life and true glory for brief and barren success. Meanwhile the great Army of the Church pursues its appointed route. Despite fierce opposition without, and impatient criticism within, through many privations and momentary repulses, it advances steadily towards its objective, unconquered and unconquerable. "Why have the Gentiles raged, and the people devised vain things?" This Army can "speak of victories." Having overthrown so many hosts in the past; having, only a century ago, come through the terrible ordeal of the Revolution and defied the monstrous power of Napoleon; what reason has it to quail before the puppets of masonic sects? "The fashion of this world passeth away"—the latest fashion in humanitarianism coupled with religious persecution as surely as the latest fashion in dress. But the Church has her foundations on the Rock, and her hope is in the name of the Almighty and Ever-Faithful God. He that is not with her is against her; and he that gathereth not with her—scattereth!

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SOCIAL WORK ON LEAVING SCHOOL[1]

By the Rev. C. D. PLATER, S.J.

HUNDREDS of young men go out from our Catholic colleges every year to enter business or study for the professions. They step gaily into the world's arena, and no one who is not a confirmed cynic can watch their early efforts without sympathy and encouragement. They are worth watching. Their character is put to the test, and their principles called into action. We see what their education has done for them better than prize-lists could tell us. Habits of perseverance and self-control, fostered amid discouragements, now bear fruit; or again, weaknesses of character, concealed, perhaps, rather than cured by school discipline, make their owner an easy prey for the world's harpies. Those who hitherto have had but little scope for choice must now choose for themselves. Their preferences will appear. Up to this they have largely been acted on by the traditions of their school and have moved with its movement. Now we shall

[1] Reprinted from *The Month*.

know whether they have got what an experienced teacher used to call "inside works" of their own.

And how important it all is! Here is the coming generation of Catholic laymen. Upon them in great measure will depend the welfare of the Church in this country. They will have difficulties to face quite as serious as any which confronted their fathers. Indeed, everything points to the likelihood of their being called upon to meet difficulties of quite uncommon magnitude, in which the severest demands will be made upon their religious principles.

It is natural, then, that we should survey with anxious concern the ranks of the young men who have lately left our Catholic colleges. In the present essay we shall endeavour to form some estimate of their moral strength, and to suggest some methods of increasing it.

It is rash to generalize; but, as the result of a persistent interrogation of those who were likely to know, we have arrived at the following conclusions, which we may state for what they are worth.

Leaving out of account our obvious failures—those who on leaving school drop their religious principles overboard with a promptness which indicates that their Catholicism was never really a part of them—we may consider the case of the majority who

have, in varying degrees, taken the impress of their schooling. Of them we report as follows. We find that, as a rule, they fulfil their religious obligations. In many cases they are remarkable for a spirit of solid piety. They lead, on the whole, much cleaner lives than the men about them. They do their work at least as conscientiously. But as a body they are, where religion is concerned, somewhat deficient in imagination.

This may not seem a very serious fault to find with them. Surely, it may be said, if they have got a good outfit of religious principles they can afford to dispense with imagination. But we reply that their lack of imagination hinders them from putting their principles into due practice. It prevents them from seeing and from letting others see what an amount of driving-power those principles possess. It means opportunities lost and power wasted and faculties atrophied and lights left under bushels. Cardinal Newman's advice to the Catholics of his day was that they should make their principles known, and should force men to look at Catholicism. The advice is still seasonable after half a century. But our young Catholics will scarcely succeed in carrying it out so long as they are lacking in imagination. Unless they see the vision they will not deliver the message.

We sometimes meet young men who are

Socialists, and who find their imagination fired by their Socialism. They are enthusiastic, enterprising, tireless. Their beliefs and their hopes urge them to an activity which disregards human respect. They revel in their Socialism. It colours their thoughts and flows into their speech. They scheme and plan and dream dreams: and their dreams are no idle imaginings, but result in the strenuous propaganda which we see all about us.

Now the Catholic Church is quite as inspiring as Socialism. It is no less stimulating to the imagination. Quite apart from the supernatural light and strength which it imparts to its members, we know that, merely as a visible institution, it constitutes a grander and more satisfying object for the imagination than any other institution in the world. Its glorious traditions and inspiring associations, its touching ritual and its lofty theology, its marvellous adaptation to every human need and aspiration, the variety of its types of sanctity and the wisdom of its rule, the tenderness of its charity and the beauty of its art, the length of its history, the breadth of its conquests—all these are aspects of a great organism which should flood the imagination with the most brilliant series of pictures. There is food enough here for the wildest of optimists, the most daring of dreamers. Here is emphatically a cause which should bring out all the generous

chivalry, all the apostolic spirit of a young man. His aged grandfather may be condoned for despairing of the world's reform; *he* retires into his shell, and (we trust) makes his peace with God. His middle-aged uncle (or, let us say his uncle with a middle-aged heart, since youth is not altogether a matter of years) is apt on the other hand to make his peace with the world; *he* regards the universe as a static affair: life does not, in his view, flow towards great issues, as it does for the young man who is facing time and the old man who is facing eternity. Unlike them he has what Heraclitus would call "a moist soul." But of our young man we expect better things. We expect him to have enthusiasm because he is a young man. And we expect that enthusiasm to be a reasoned, balanced, effective, ennobling enthusiasm because he is a Catholic.

For enthusiasm should be in his case the efflorescence of his supernatural faith. Our plea for a little more imagination is a plea for a more lively faith—for a faith which will illuminate nature and reveal God's action in secular history and discover Christ under the beggar's rags and turn life into an absorbing campaign in which there is every opportunity and every inducement to play a distinguished part.

The process of cultivating what we may call a Catholic imagination is rendered at once more necessary and more difficult by the

surroundings in which a young Catholic finds himself to-day. We congratulate ourselves in this country upon having, to use Cardinal Manning's phrase, emerged from the catacombs. But whatever may be the disadvantages of catacombs, they at least ensure that the imagination of him who lives in them shall retain a Catholic colour; for his eye meets nothing but Catholic pictures, his ear hears only Catholic sounds—he is cut off from pagan influences. He may not make the most of his environment; but at all events he knows of no other. He lives in a Catholic atmosphere.

But our Catholic young man has come out into the open. He is merged in the crowd of the forum. The tombs of the martyrs are no longer under his eyes. Secular sights and sounds crowd upon his senses. Secular interests absorb him. If he wants a Catholic atmosphere he must create it within his own spirit. If his imagination is to have a Catholic colour he must make a deliberate effort to nourish it on Catholic food. He must meet my Lady Poverty in Piccadilly, and traffic with angels at Charing Cross, and find faith in Fleet Street.

With enlarged spheres of influence and increased opportunities of spreading the light comes the difficulty of keeping that light burning. The little oil-lamp of the catacombs has to contend with the electric arcs of the

city, the glare of the world's footlights. If the former burns low the poor boy is dazzled by the latter. He may easily forget all about the flame he holds in his hand, not remembering that, if tended, it would remain burning when all other lights were quenched. How can he be got to think of it? for as long as he thinks of it he will not put his trust in the other lights.

For we do not believe that when Catholic young men lose interest in their religion it is because they have taken to immorality or steeped themselves in infidel literature. Of course this may be the case. But it is usually more true to say that the immorality and infidelity, when they occur, are the consequence of a want of interest in religion. True, the young man needs protecting. But what he needs very much more is fortifying; and one way of fortifying him is to get him to cultivate a Catholic imagination. It is evident that one who has nourished his mind on the stores of Catholic literature will get quite a new view of his privileges and responsibilities. The routine of his business life will be illuminated by his Catholic ideals. It will become not merely the drab interstice between week-ends, but itself part of a stirring campaign. It will take on all the colours of a crusade. Viewed from without it may still appear humdrum, as the external life of the Curé of Ars might

have appeared humdrum. But the slow-going waggon will be hitched to a star : it will swing along with the rhythm of the planets.

In particular it will be seen how wisely the old books made much of what they called " the duties of one's state of life." For it must not be supposed that the possession of a Catholic imagination will send off our young men at a tangent from their professional occupations : on the contrary, it will give a new value to their daily work and enable them to do it more efficiently. As a matter of fact, one of the best ways in which Catholics may serve the Church is by attaining to distinction in their respective professions ; for they thereby acquire definite functions in the social organism, and are in a position to exert moral influence in spheres where the mere amateur would be discredited. We must insist on this point, for fear lest our whole contention be misunderstood. We are not advocating mere viewiness or fussiness or irresponsible agitation. We have no desire to see a type of young man corresponding to that of which Dickens's Mrs. Jellaby is a familiar example —the lady who neglected her household and her neighbours in order to provide remote savages with articles of dubious utility.

Nevertheless the quickened imagination which will lead Catholic young men to work strenuously at their professions, to cultivate

a sense of moral responsibility in business life, to fulfil the duties of their state and to exercise neighbourly charity, will also lead them to take part, according to opportunity, in Catholic social work, and particularly in social work on behalf of the poor. We may recall some striking words uttered by Cardinal Vaughan :—

> The influence of the Catholic laity may be exercised in many ways—through literature, science, art, and the professions. But in no way can they make their influence more effectively felt upon society in general than by direct and personal exertion to raise and save that great lower stratum of mankind, whose condition I have already referred to. I do not hesitate to place the regeneration of the poor above all other social needs. I do not hesitate to say that the *suscitans a terra inopem et de stercore erigens pauperem* is a godlike work that ennobles every Catholic who puts his hand to it.

Our fellow-Catholics, who have the first claim upon our service, are perishing soul and body by the thousand. The terrible leakage which, in spite of our steady stream of converts, keeps the total number of Catholics in this country from increasing, cannot be met by the priests alone. Economic and social considerations are so closely intertwined with religious that the co-operation of every Catholic is called for if we are to check the spiritual loss which is going on around us. We must help our destitute poor to live like human beings before we can expect them to discharge their obligations as Catholics. And in this matter it is not money that is chiefly wanted, but personal service. But our leakage is due

to other causes besides extreme poverty and social isolation. There are positive influences at work which are sapping the faith of our people. Here is an extract from a letter recently circulated by Mr. Norman Potter :—

> Night after night, throughout the great cities of England, the Socialist, with a whole heart, is preaching his propaganda in workmen's clubs, from travelling vans at street corners, in single rooms, in lecture-halls ; day by day he is rousing the quiet villages and market-places of our country-side. Recently the Socialists' agents have made nearly a thousand "converts" in the eastern counties alone, and have gained six hundred adherents in Norwich. If the red oratory achieves these results among our slow and placid country-folk, what chance has the underfed, alert, inflammable cockney of resisting preachers whose doctrines are seductive, and who, to do them justice, throw their lives into the cause ? . . . The Socialist preaches in season and out of season, fired with the infectious conviction of a man believing himself to be possessed of a new gospel.

Nothing short of a counter-faith, he adds, will save us : "Where are our Catholic laity? What are they doing? We want men and women with ideals, who will come and make them realities."

Here again it is personal service that is called for. Our Catholic faith gives us a sure foundation, and ideals which are at once more noble, more practicable, and more stimulating to action than those of the Socialist creed. Yet how is it that we allow ourselves to be outstripped in zeal by those whose horizon is commonly limited to the material world? If the Socialist is winning adherents from our ranks, it is because we ourselves have failed

to raise the banner of Catholic social reform—of a reform which would satisfy the needs of soul and body alike. It is simply deplorable that our young men will not realize the influence which they might wield in this critical struggle. The Church has given into their hands weapons which may well stand the test of time, since they have been forged in the armoury of God. Cannot they be persuaded to use them for the defence of the Church and the welfare of their country?

Too many of us seem obsessed by a kind of fatalism. We read of the general decay of faith, of the advances of materialism and anarchy, of the vilest social injustice, of the acute misery of the poor; and the whole thing passes before our vision like a lurid romance. We are moved—but not to action. We speculate instead of deliberating. We forecast the future instead of influencing it. We are like men watching a thunderstorm rather than like men trying to extinguish a fire. Yet, apart from higher considerations, the game would be no less interesting were we to play it instead of watching it. And though there is a growing tendency to watch games instead of playing them, the Catholic Church should surely be able to put a team into the field. We confess to having little patience with those timid souls who are always dismayed at our lack of numbers: who think that we can do nothing

because our resources are dwarfed by those of the Establishment, or our voting strength inferior to that of the Nonconformists. They regard our situation as resembling that of Mrs. Partington and her mop *versus* the Atlantic. It does not occur to them to regard it as resembling that of a few fishermen and their Gospel against the world. From the way in which some of us talk we might be a fantastic sect propelled by an erratic noblewoman, instead of being members of the Universal Church impelled by the Spirit of God. If a handful of Fabians can leave their mark on the thought of the country, a compact body of Catholics should be able to impress their principles on the large number of people who still prefer reform to revolution. We have a splendid opportunity, and our young men should be quick to seize it.

The English people is capable of recovery from the wounds made by sin and neglect, however deep-seated the disease: *fecit nationes sanabiles.* But to effect their conversion, in addition to prayer and preaching, they need to see Christ moving among the multitude, healing their infirmities, in the person not only of priests, but of Catholic men and women, like themselves bound by no official duty. . . . Then will the English people turn to them instinctively with respect, and bow down before the religion which presented Christ to them in so admirable a social form.

These are not the words of an unpractical young enthusiast; they were spoken deliberately to a Catholic Conference by Cardinal Vaughan.

It is seldom very profitable to tell people that they *ought* to be interested in a particular cause. We may argue hotly on the matter without producing any result save a feeling of irritation in our hearers. The cause is but a word to them, and the repeated word will get on their nerves. If our cause is the discovery of the north pole they will mentally consign the north pole to the tropics. If our cause is social reform, they will wish all social reformers at Jericho. The thing becomes a nuisance. They are honestly bored, and no amount of lecturing on their obligations will awaken in them an atom of interest.

Why, then, it may be asked, write pamphlets on the subject? Because although it is generally useless to tell men to be interested, it is quite possible to get them interested. It is fatuous to exhort them to be enthusiastic; but it is not difficult to make them enthusiastic. Enthusiasm is contagious, and young men easily catch it. Make the cause live for them and they will live for it. Put them where they may see for themselves; and then feel for the electric switch that will connect the current with their imagination:

We all know what it is to be intensely interested. Let us visit one of the old cathedrals of England, say Canterbury. We follow round the venerable pile a party of tourists unaccompanied by a competent guide. They walk hither and thither, and stare, and *suppose* it is fine—some of them may even *feel* that it is fine: but their impressions are vague, and they carry little away. Up comes a scholar (we are thinking, for

instance, of the late Father John Morris), who combines deep erudition on the subject with the power of conveying what he knows in a simple, picturesque, and easily intelligible form. Immediately every stone bristles with meaning. The group of tourists begin to live in the past. They enter into the mind of the mediæval architect. They realize his aims and his difficulties: they feel his successes and failures. They go on to find themselves in touch with the people who worshipped there. They trace the details of the tragedy of à Becket. They see the grim faces of the murderers, the flashes of their armour: they hear the tramp of their iron heels in the cloister, rudely breaking upon the song of the monks in choir. They see the blood of the martyr staining the altar steps as his body welters on the pavement. Then visions float before them of a king, bare-backed, receiving the lashes of penance, and the devout throngs flocking to the shrine of one who had fought out the battle between Church and State, and perished and triumphed in one and the same act. And as they listen and their minds are filled with what they hear, there is one spontaneous verdict drawn from people who never in their lives before realized it, that history is absorbingly interesting. History was interesting all the time, but they had never felt it before: and from that day will feel a drawing towards history, and will find in it a pleasure and a hobby.[1]

Instead, therefore, of insisting on the need of interest, let us consider what can be done to propagate it among Catholic young men who have left school.

Left school! Here is the difficulty. It is precisely during the school years that the seeds of interest in social work ought to be sown, as was pointed out in another paper.[2] Yet something must be added here about the influence of a school; for that influence should

[1] *Fortifying the Layman.* By Ernest R. Hull, S.J. (Catholic Truth Society, price sixpence). This stimulating little book should be in the hands of all.

[2] *Social Work in Catholic Schools.* (C.T.S. 1d.)

not cease when a boy has gone into the world. The ties between a Catholic college and its old *alumni* should be very close. They are, in fact, often strengthened by the existence of Old Boys' Associations. Now these Associations would gain very considerably in usefulness and in solidarity were they to include among their aims the cultivation in their members of what may be called the social sense. They might, singly or in combination, help to support the new Catholic settlement. They might provide their respective schools with literature, and offer prizes for debates and essays on social subjects, and send down an occasional lecturer. They might do much to bring our schools into touch with social effort, and help the school authorities to counteract the bookishness and unreality which is apt to beset our studies. Above all, members of such Associations might follow up boys who have just left school, and initiate them into various forms of social work. Few young men will make the plunge for themselves. They are not likely to pay a spontaneous visit to a settlement, or a social institute, or a boys' club. But if an old schoolfellow will carry them off there, they may go again on their own account.

We lay great stress on this work of initiating Catholic young men into social service. It is easily done and may have most excellent results. The subject itself is interesting, and

the boys are ready to be interested. There is plenty of gunpowder about: it needs but the spark. An evening at Mr. Norman Potter's club at Bermondsey, or at some similar institution, may do the business. And of course the initiation may be performed by other schoolfellows. Priests, in particular, have often won valuable recruits by piloting a young fellow down the slums, or bringing him into a club, or lending him a book, or giving him a few striking figures. The "pater," too, might give the matter his consideration. Besides meeting his boys at the bridge table, or in the motor, or in the office, he might find other points of contact, and help to give them an interest in work which will colour their life.

And we might push a few books about. Sometimes they will remain uncut. But sometimes, too, they will switch on the current. There are quite a number of volumes across which we always feel tempted to write TOLLE LEGE, for we have known specific cases in which they have created a demand for more. We may mention Mr. Masterman's *The Heart of the Empire*, Mrs. Crawford's *Ideals of Charity*, May Quinlan's *My Brother's Keeper*, Jack London's *People of the Abyss*, Father Cuthbert's *Catholic Ideals in Social Life*, Richard Whiteing's *Number 5 John Street*, and also such publications of the Catholic Truth Society as *Social Work for Catholic Layfolk*,

Social Questions and the Duty of Catholics (C. S. Devas), and Father Hull's *Fortifying the Layman*, already referred to. We may profitably search our consciences and our libraries, and ask in what proportion such books as we have just mentioned stand to our accumulation of novels and cheap magazines.

We may capture the imagination of a young Catholic by giving him a sight of the poor or lending him a stimulating book about the condition in which they live. But we may also deliver our assault from the other side. We may start, not from rags, but from Blue-books. Where the sight of slums might produce a feeling of hopeless resignation or even repulsion, the sight of a scientific endeavour to improve the slums may enlist hopeful co-operation. A committee meeting may excite where an alley would depress.

It may be objected that charity organization is uninspiring, and that it is better to begin with the picturesque. A young man has no stomach for Blue-books. He would find a social bureau a bore and a committee-meeting intolerable. But this is not the case provided we make a wise approach. Take him, for instance, to the offices of the British Institute of Social Service, at 4, Tavistock Square, London, W.C. He will look in vain for rags. There is not even an orphan on show! Instead of this he will find typewriters clicking and secretaries

working and small boys carrying books, and well-dressed people reading them. He will discover that he is in a great clearing-house of social information, and that thousands of people who want to help in making England less like a human shamble and more like a civilized country come here for advice and direction. And if he is apprehensive about the unsectarian character of the Institute, we may remind him that the Archbishop of Westminster is a Vice-President, and that a number of Catholics co-operate with it.

The sight may be a little puzzling at first, if he is not alive to the importance of method in social service. But he may easily be brought to see how his own professional work touches the business which is being transacted in Tavistock Square at many points. Show him this and he will at once become excited. As a Catholic he will be more excited than if he had no ideals beyond "barley feeding and material ease." He will prize sound methods all the more highly because he sees his Lord in the poor. With the value of method, training, and co-operation in charitable and social work we are not now concerned. We are only concerned to show that young men may be roused to social action by visiting a bureau as well as by visiting a slum.

But in one way or another we must contrive to get hold of our young men. The appeal

must be personal and individual. It must be made with tact. We shall meet, of course, with objections, and must be prepared for them. This will be all the easier because they are few in number and admit of a ready answer. We may, in conclusion, consider two or three of them more or less in the form in which they are usually presented.

The first objection sounds really convincing. "Yes, it's an excellent work. We *are* losing our poor, I'm told, to a terrible extent. Most of the boys leave us when they quit our poor schools. But of course *I* can do nothing. I'm at work all day in the City, and come home fagged, and my week-ends are always filled up. But I don't mind giving you a small subscription."

To which it may be answered: "My dear fellow, have you ever noticed that the few Catholic young men who *are* at present doing a great deal of valuable social work have, as a rule, quite as much professional business to do as you have, and sometimes considerably more? But they manage to make time somehow, and their business doesn't suffer. On the contrary, they seem all the more keen on it, and make it succeed. And there are so many kinds of social work waiting to be done that I am sure I can find you an interesting and useful job that would fit in nicely with your business hours. Anyhow, give it a chance."

The second objection is merely stupid ; but it is also very common. " I'm afraid I'm awfully hard up ; I need every penny I can make. Perhaps I may be able to help later on."

The answer is obvious. " I don't want your money. I want *you*. If I can get you, I can get such money as is required from some one else. I want you to hew wood and draw water—not to draw cheques." Materials for a still more convincing answer will be found in the following passage from Mrs. Crawford's admirable book already referred to :—

There are still some among us who think that if they subscribe to a fair number of charities, nothing further should be expected of them, and I cannot but think that a certain class of charity sermon is largely responsible for this inadequate view. How often are we not told from the pulpit that if we cannot give personal help we can always give money, that all we are asked to do is to write a cheque, and so on. However true it may be in the individual case it is certainly not true in its general application, . . . and students of the *Graves de Communi* Encyclical will find in it no warrant for such a theory. The idea that we can contract out of our social and human obligations by money payments, large or small, is at the root not only of much misplaced charity and wasteful expenditure, but of the false relationship between rich and poor that frequently prevails. Individual thought and devotion are needed far more than money—are, indeed, in the long run, the only things that will avail. It is a mere commonplace of philanthropic experience that the most successful ventures are not those founded and endowed with large sums and started with every material advantage, but rather those that have begun in a very small way, and have struggled upwards through poverty and discouragement, thanks to the self-sacrificing labours of one or two. And yet we all talk at times as if money were the one thing needful.[1]

[1] *Ideals of Charity*.

The third objection is perhaps the most common of all. "Well, I might find the *time*, as far as that goes, but, you see, that sort of thing is not in my line. I should feel awfully out of it talking to the kids at the club or going among the hop-pickers. It isn't as if I could *do* anything. I should be quite useless, really!"

"Do you know young X. Y. Z.?"

"Yes, he was in my class at school. Decent fellow."

"Not a genius?"

"No, I think we kept pretty well together at the bottom of the list."

"Well, he writes to me to say that he goes once a week to a Catholic boys' club in his town. When I first asked him to try it, he funked it like anything. Now he tells me what an ass he must have been to hang back, for the work is 'simply rip.' He has made tremendous friends with the boys and teaches them gym. He says they are much more interesting than the people he meets at home!"

"Perhaps so. But I'm no good at gym."

"Well you can vamp on the piano and play the banjo and sing a good song. Besides you might add to these useful accomplishments. It's not difficult to pick up wood-carving. And if the worst comes to the worst you can play draughts or tiddliwinks. Best of all, become

an officer in the C.B.B. or a Scout Master, or ask the Catholic Social Guild to find you a job."

And finally we sometimes have to allay the scruples of those who feel that to take part in work of this kind would be to trespass on the province of the priest. Such as these may be deluged with proof positive to the contrary.[1] We will allow ourselves one quotation, and it shall be from Cardinal Vaughan :

> The principle of the active participation of the laity in the solicitude and work of the clergy is fully recognized in fact. . . . .
>
> [Work among the poor] is work for the laity—they cannot do it vicariously through Priests and Sisters. There is a work of personal service that they must perform themselves. It is as necessary for the right formation of their own Christian character as it is beneficial to their poorer brethren. . . . It has been whispered that the laity are not sufficiently employed in the work of the Church. Would to God that more among them stepped forward to throw themselves into the great Christian work of regenerating the masses in overcrowded centres of population ! This work of fraternal charity is to their hand. The Church invites, nay presses them into her service. Let them gird themselves and put their back into the work. The chivalry of personal service to Christ in His poor is open to them.

But it must not be imagined that the field of social activity is limited to running boys' clubs and the like. If our Catholic young men who have left school would cultivate a social sense they would find work to their hand at every turn. They would find opportunities of helping to give a Catholic boy a start in life or of furthering some local movement for remedying social evils

[1] *Vide* Leo XIII, *passim.*

or of putting their professional or business knowledge at the service of a Catholic institution or of taking part in a social study club. By becoming members of the Catholic Social Guild they will avoid the discouragement which comes from isolated action and will learn methods of making their work more fruitful.

In a previous pamphlet of this series [1] the Bishop of Northampton has insisted on the need of multiplying social study clubs up and down the country. This is a work in which the old boys of our Catholic colleges (particularly if they have also had a University training) may render most valuable aid. They will themselves gain much from sympathetic contact with the intelligent young working men who may be attracted by such study clubs.[2]

In many cases the organization already exists, and all that is needed is to give it a social colour. The men's club or the Federation branch gives valuable opportunities for meeting ; a little imagination will discover methods of making it a centre of social education with-

[1] *The Church and Social Reformers.* (C.T.S. 1d.)

[2] Such study clubs should, it need hardly be said, secure the approbation of the local clergy. It is well to start on a very small scale and in an informal way. The main obstacle will be diffidence. But if a Catholic layman will begin by asking three or four men to come and talk over the project, ways and means will soon suggest themselves. See the leaflet entitled *How to organize a Study Circle*, issued by the Catholic Social Guild, 4 Tavistock Square, London, W.C. (4 copies for 1d.).

out in the least interfering with its other activities. Indeed, the strength and efficiency of such bodies may be almost indefinitely increased by an infusion of social study and social work. In these lines of activity the old boys of Catholic colleges have many advantages and should take a leading part.

It is the young that are the hope of these social movements, their enthusiasm is more easily enkindled, they are the hope of the Church, but do they know what endless opportunities they have before them, do they realize that personal service is demanded, that to live for self will only breed weariness and unrest? . . . The youth of the upper classes especially—has anyone shown them how much they are wanted or how much there is to do?[1]

[1] *Settlement Work.* By Lady Edmund Talbot. (C.T.S. 1d.)

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THE DUTIES OF CONJUGAL LIFE

A PASTORAL LETTER (LENT, 1909)

By CARDINAL MERCIER
Archbishop of Mechlin

DEAR BRETHREN,—You cannot be ignorant of the danger which threatens a noble nation—our near neighbour: a nation in which, despite this danger, there still remain vast reserves of generosity and greatness of soul.

In 1800 there were, in each family in France, four or five children, on an average; in 1860 there were not more than three; in 1905 there were only two. Taking the homes of France as they are at present, and setting aside 11 per cent. as occupied by bachelors over thirty years of age, we discover that nearly 15 per cent. have no children at all; 22 per cent. have one child; 20 per cent. have two; 13 per cent. have three; and at the very most 18 per cent. have more than three children.

Further, though mortality is decreasing, yet the excess of births over deaths diminishes with almost mechanical regularity. In 1902 this excess amounted to 84,000; in 1903 it fell to 73,000; in 1904 to 57,000; in 1905 to 37,000; in 1906 to 27,000. In 1907 there were 20,000 more deaths than births![1] "Here," says a German observer, "are more coffins than cradles. Peoples who thus break

[1] *Réforme Sociale*, July, 1908, p. 15.

away from the fundamental laws of life must inevitably disappear—must cease to exist—and that entirely by their own ill-doing."

Our own [Belgian] nation has prospered exceedingly. In the scale of commercial importance, Belgium, with its seven million inhabitants, occupies the fifth place—following England, Germany, the United States, and France. But relatively to her population, she heads the economic movement amongst the peoples of the Old and New World alike.

We may feel a measure of patriotic pride in these material achievements, but at the same time we cannot avoid the dismal consciousness that, in certain districts of our country, the plague from which France is suffering so fearfully, has made decided progress. And being aware of this state of things, we must conceive the most lively apprehension respecting the future of our fatherland. Doubtless the population of Belgium is still increasing: the death-rate, moreover, is not so great as it was, but the birth-rate is falling. As yet, thank God, the decrease is not so great as in France. In that country statistics show no more than 20 births per thousand inhabitants; with us, until 1880, births were 31 per thousand inhabitants. But during the last twenty-five years that level has certainly not been maintained, for in 1890 Belgium could reckon only 29 births per 1,000, and in 1906 a bare 25.

This decrease is most apparent in the Walloon provinces, and yet it is a fact that the number of marriages per annum has grown steadily greater. What are we to conclude? Simply that the fruitfulness of those unions has been affected for the worse.

Throughout the country, towns of any considerable importance show, as a rule, a rapidly decreasing birth-rate. In very large urban centres, the death-rate is overtaking the birth-rate in most alarming fashion; indeed, cases

are not unknown where deaths are in excess of births. Hitherto people have come from the country and settled in the towns in such numbers as to fill the gaps in the urban populations—thus concealing the danger from us. But some rural districts are being swept bare of inhabitants, and taking the country as a whole, official figures present a steady decrease in the birth-rate.[1]

A dastardly propaganda, carried on by means of lectures, pamphlets, newspaper articles, and practical demonstrations, encourages the suppression of child-bearing and induces parents to adopt homicidal practices in circumstances and to an extent hitherto unheard of.

Certain doctors are exceedingly to blame for this state of things. Instead of acting as honest advisers to their clients of either sex, instead of enlightening them concerning their moral obligations and supporting them in the day of trial, these men are degraded enough to excuse—if they do not actually encourage—the perverse instincts born of selfishness. These men abandon their social mission, finding accomplices in sundry apothecaries' shops, and necessary help at the hands of certain miserable midwives. And little by little, into every class of society, there filters a series of rotten, unwholesome ideas, which threaten danger to the unborn child, if they do not render parenthood wholly contemptible. Before long, child-bearing will be viewed, not as a duty, but as a burden so inconvenient that it may be —perhaps ought to be—thrown off.

One might ask if the public authorities have countered with sufficient energy a propaganda so utterly destructive of the nation's future. Are they suitably equipped to meet and beat it? Have fathers of families displayed the

[1] Birth-rate in Belgium for the years 1901–07 :—1901, 200,077; 1902, 195,871; 1903, 192,301; 1904, 191,721; 1905, 187,437; 1906, 186,271: 1907. 185,138.

watchfulness they should in bringing to justice the ruffians who, relying on our natural propensity to vice, are endeavouring to deluge decent homes with filthy literature?

The Civil Court of Lille, by a verdict pronounced on June 6, 1907, gave judgement in favour of three good working-men who claimed damages for the introduction into their houses of a certain indecent prospectus. The Court decided that the inviolability of men's homes must be secured against the wholly unwelcome intrusion of publications offensive to the dignity of the home, and pernicious in the highest degree to the morality of the children and other members of the household. On July 1, 1896, the Civil Court of the Seine had already given judgement in almost identical terms, and quite recently the Criminal Courts at Charleroi condemned a wretch for publicly disseminating instructions in methods of preventing conception.

May the law deal energetically with the leaders in this vile campaign! May all decent men lend their aid by denouncing promptly and definitely such of these criminal attempts as may come to their knowledge! And may the organs of the press—laying aside all party distinctions — unite in the interests of public decency and the future of our country, against the authors and abettors of these neo-Malthusian doctrines and practices!

Nevertheless public prophylactic measures, however healthy and indispensable they may be, cannot stop the tide without assistance. Why? Because the primary causes of the limitation of childbirth are *hidden* and *personal*. The notions of conjugal duty, of the healthy and vigorous education of children, are either changed or altogether perverted, and these are precisely the notions which must be strengthened in, or restored to, the moral conscience of parents.

Brethren, our language may sometimes sound harsh to you and unpleasant, but remember, that duty of which we must remind you is, beyond doubt, grave, peremptory, and most inadequately understood.

And is it not precisely for that reason that we should impress it upon you the more emphatically, and exhort you, in season and out of season, to fulfil it in all honesty?

***

Marriage, my brethren, is not a private agreement by which a man and woman freely pledge themselves to an exchange of affection and a community of interests—all the while retaining full liberty to separate, the very day they deem it desirable or convenient.

Marriage, to be sure, is freely contracted: there must be no compulsion. But once a man and woman—in complete freedom—have made this contract, their union assumes the character of an institution at once religious and national. By their union in marriage, each of the parties confers a Sacrament upon the other; they are themselves the ministers whom our Lord Jesus Christ employs for the communication of that sacramental grace of which He is the Author.

The object of this grace is to place the husband and wife in a position to face the difficulties and bear the burdens entailed by the duties they have taken upon themselves.

"This is a great mystery," said Paul, "great before Christ and the Church." ("Sacramentum hoc magnum est; ego autem dico in Christo et in Ecclesia.") As Christ desired to unite Himself to the company of believers that He might lead them to the happiness of heaven, just so a man joins himself to the woman of his choice, to the end that through fusion of their lives, children may be born to them who, in their turn, will carry on the

Christian generation. The direct, the principal effect of the sacrament of marriage, is the continuation of that Church, glorious, without spot or wrinkle, ever young, ever holy, without reproach ; that Church for which our Lord Jesus Christ poured out His blood, promulgated His doctrine, instituted His Sacraments ; that Church which is destined—after a short sojourn in this world of strife, toil, and trial—to glorify God for ever in the unruffled unalloyed peace and joy of paradise.

When you, brethren, are joined in marriage, when you found a family, you provide the Church of Christ with the natural channel for the transmission of her vitality. And since this transmission cannot take place normally except by the exclusive union of man and wife, and their unfailing co-partnership in the education of their children, their wills are pledged to their marriage and bound up with it indissolubly. After they have given themselves one to the other before the representative of the Church, who blessed their union, they are no longer free to withdraw their consent to that union. There, you perceive, is the reason why the Church has always claimed the right of adjusting matrimonial legislation.

Furthermore, there can be no doubt that marriage is also a civil institution—a detail of public order—which the State cannot ignore. It is of vast importance that properly-constituted unions should by no means be confounded with those short-lived intrigues which last as long as the caprice of passion dictates. At the same time that which, in ambiguous language, is called a civil marriage is really no marriage at all : it is nothing more than an official acknowledgement of the civil effects involved by the only union worthy the name of marriage—a religious marriage.

In Belgium and in other countries under the Napoleonic Code, the contracting parties

present themselves to the magistrate *before* the marriage is solemnized ; therefore the recognition by the law of those effects which it must legalize, take place by anticipation. Let there be no misunderstanding in this matter : at whatever time the temporal authority intervenes to regulate the legal effects of a Christian marriage, it supposes that marriage to be an accomplished fact—or it *ought* to suppose it to be so ; and it can do no more than turn to account a state of things already existing—or presumed to exist. This state of things can arise only through a marriage ratified by the Church, not otherwise.

We have said then, brethren, that the union of a Christian man and wife is indissoluble, as is its divine antitype—the union of Christ with His Church. Christ impregnates our souls with His grace and makes them bring forth the fruits of holiness.

Now the primordial *raison d'être* of the union of man and wife is the foundation of a family, the procreation of children, whom they have the honour, not less than the obligation, of bringing up in Christian faith and morality ; to these children they are commissioned to hand down the treasures which they themselves have inherited by the fact of their incorporation in the society called the Church.

It is clear, therefore, that marriage has for its primary end a duty from which married people cannot withdraw themselves—saving the wholly exceptional case where, by mutual consent, they agree to seek in voluntary continence the realization of a higher ideal—the mortification of the senses and closer attachment to God and their spiritual interests.

How utterly mistaken, then, are those who represent marriage as a union of which the object is physical love, and self-interest the condition !

No doubt the material necessities of life must

find a place in the considerations of those who wish to marry. That is as it should be, for married life and the care of a family to come are not matters to be undertaken in haphazard fashion. But foresight must not become mere calculation ; their hopes should not degenerate into a sordid and usurious speculation.

Again, the attractions of conjugal life are certainly legitimate ; nor is it in any way forbidden that men and women should be drawn by them, for they are in the nature of a reward for the acceptance of the burden of paternity and the duties of motherhood, agonizingly painful as these latter often are. And just as Nature has attached a sensible pleasure to eating and drinking—functions by which the life of the individual is sustained—so she has placed in the attractions of love a guarantee of the perpetuation of our species.

But whether the individual or the species be considered, the satisfaction of sense is only justified by the particular function which it presupposes and is bound to ensure. And as rational nature revolts at the grossness of gluttony and drunkenness, so also—but far more emphatically — does she denounce sensual pleasures when sought outside of and apart from that order, which she, Nature, has laid down for the transmission of life. Brutes have nothing but instincts : these they cannot but obey, for they are incapable of moderation or self-restraint. But man is privileged to be able to elevate love to the dignity of a rational emotion. Marriage is the fusion of two *human* lives ; it is the union of the bodies, frail to be sure, and destined soon to fade and perish. But above and beyond this, it is the union of two souls, whose minds act together for the completion of their thoughts, whose hearts are united that their joys and consolations may be doubled by exchange, whose wills become as one will, that each may furnish the other

with help, strength, and energy to support their personal trials and fulfil their part in the grand work of bringing up a family to serve God, our Lord.

Man is not the slave of his passions ; he has, to a large extent, the power to master them, to direct them by his intelligence, and subject them to serve a proper end ; and from the empire he exercises over them, his moral dignity arises. Should he abdicate his sovereignty in favour of his passions, shame is his portion, and his conscience, fallen from its estate, becomes debased, degraded.

Materialists have striven mightily to force upon our observation the evidence of their animal origin. They would have experienced less difficulty in proving that their principles —if carried to a logical conclusion—would reduce morality to a meaningless word, and that the best amongst them, even as the worst, had not yet passed the animal stage. If man were matter—merely—all his functions would be organic ; they would belong to one and the same order. In that case it is hard to see why a man should be reckoned as foul and degraded because he yields without restraint to one of these functions rather than another. In any materialistic conception of nature, resistance to the peremptory demands of passion—in other words, virtuous endeavour to overcome nature—becomes an utterly senseless proceeding.

As for you, brethren, who have kept in your hearts a loyal regard for the laws of Christ and of Christian morality, you confess that it is your honourable duty to resist heartily the tyranny of passion ; and you will acknowledge and proclaim, without boastfulness, but without faltering, that those who allow themselves to become thralls to vice or slaves to selfishness, who seize the joys of conjugal intercourse and refuse obedience to the laws which govern the

reproduction of life—such as these are rebels against God and the Gospel of His Christ; they are false to all that gives a man the dignity that should be his.

Catholic husbands and wives, make an end, I beg you, of reading or allowing your imagination to batten on the unwholesome literature to be found in the modern novel, the newspaper, the problem-play, where morality is made of no account; where man and woman seek for and find one another solely for purposes of pleasure, and where greed and vice supply the motive for everything that is done. Banish from your sight those dramas in which, under pretext of showing you life as it is, the playwrights present you with what they rake from the sewers. Vicious characters—men and women—stalk the boards, made attractive by all the arts of their willing creators; meanwhile honesty and decency provide a dull and uninteresting background. And by these manœuvres a certain plausibility is given to the view that morality is really quite impracticable, and that the impossibility of being honestly good offers God's creatures only the alternative of becoming libertines or hypocrites!

As a matter of fact, the loose principles imbibed from modern literature and the stage prove excellent foils for the teachings of Christianity. We have here a study in contrasts, by which no little emphasis and light are thrown on Catholic doctrine. For the romantic and dramatic literature of which I speak knows only one type of man—the proud man, the self-sufficient man, the man who gives rein to his passions, as might any haughty pagan. And in the end this literature arrives at the conclusion that continence and self-restraint are simply impossible.

But Christianity is equally aware of the frailty of the human heart, and when she lays

her commands upon a man, she at the same time points out to him and provides for him the means he shall use to overcome his weakness. The austere law of self-abnegation and prayer to God applies to every one—priest and layman, man and woman, married and unmarried. To every one, none excepted, Our Divine Saviour has said: "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke ix. 23). And again, "Every one of you that doth not renounce all that he possesseth cannot be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 33).

Even in marriage husbands and wives must place restraint upon their inclinations. Every husband should have that respect and regard for the constitution of his wife, which prudence and delicate consideration demand. For a day may come when the necessity of preserving the health of one or the other will place an obstacle between them, even, it may be, for a considerable time. What attention, think you, are they likely to pay to this obstacle, if the very elements of self-restraint are lacking to them? Everybody knows well that temperance and sobriety place a definite limit to eating and drinking. Conjugal chastity is the more necessary, inasmuch as the impulses it arouses and regulates are more blindly imperious. And you must not exclaim that I ask of you that which is impossible. St. Augustine will tell you, in words the Council of Trent thought well to repeat, that God never asks the impossible, but He expects, that having done what in you lies, you should call in His grace to help your insufficiency.

One of the effects of the sacramental grace received in marriage is to prepare the husband and wife for the most trying hours in their married life—for the times when the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh very frail.

Husbands, Christian men, you *do* desire,

honestly and sincerely, to remain unswervingly faithful, do you not? Ask God then, ask Him every day of your lives to give you the courage that never fails. And you, Christian wives, are you afraid of the dangers of motherhood? Those dangers are not so great as many are pleased to assert. But if, as may happen in exceptional circumstances, a surgeon must be called in, well, modern surgery is such that you may place the greatest confidence in it. For it is an established fact that nowadays a good operator saves the mother's life in 95 per cent. of the cases submitted to him. And yet, small as it may be, the danger of an operation calls for a courage that can only be assured to you by prayer and trust in Him to whose everlasting arms you have committed yourselves.

Husbands and wives, remember your heavenly origin, your immortal destiny. Leave to those in whose eyes marriage is nothing more than a union, of which sensual pleasure is the sole end, the degrading idea that passion is sovereign, indomitable, lawful at all times. *You* must ascend to higher ideals. Let your marriage be a real union of your bodies and your souls: let your joys be sober and moderate. But see well to it that you do not seek those joys for themselves alone, nor apart from the fulfilment of the conditions which Nature has established for the foundation of the family.

I fully appreciate, my dear brethren, your state of mind on this subject. You have no desire to ignore either self-restraint or the mutual respect imposed upon you by the dignity of conjugal life and the primary end of marriage. But should any one remind you of the mandate God gave in the beginning—"increase and multiply"—you gaze round you in dismay, measuring the harsh conditions of life as you find it, the tyrannous demands of

custom, convention, and fashion ; you peer into the future, fearfully wondering how your children, if they become more numerous, are to succeed in keeping that place in society which, with most justifiable pride, you occupy yourselves. "Who," you ask in your anxiety, "says it is our duty to lower the social position of our children? And if continence is beyond our strength, can you blame us for using our marriage rights and evading the natural result —the birth of children?"

Well, if *you*, who are in easy circumstances, who have a modest competence, or you who have amassed, it may be, a fortune more or less considerable, if *you* are warranted in using language of this sort, what might we not expect from the humble working-man who carries on a hand-to-mouth existence on scanty pay? What might not be said—and with far greater justice than in your case—by the toiler of the fields or the factory hand, who labour, labour unremittingly, and for all that, hardly know what it means to have something laid by for a rainy day, or to regard the future without misgiving? Believe me, I understand your anxieties to the full. I will even add that, given the strong undercurrent of self-indulgence that is traversing the social body, given the narrow, the "middle-class" ideas which many people select as the goal and guiding-star of their lives, and consequently of the preparation by which they endeavour to shape their children's careers—given these things, then your anxieties need no explanation. In fact, they would be justified, were the reasoning which inspires them anything but false and unfounded.

Not very long ago—certainly since 1880—Bebel, a well-known Socialist leader in Germany, described as "repugnant" the manœuvres of married people who satisfy their sensual appetites, but with deliberate selfish-

ness take measures to prevent the birth of children. Nowadays, forgetfulness of Christian morality joined to the flourishing condition of what is called, by a strange contradiction, the morality of selfishness, and the direct encouragement given—here openly, there in secret—by the "liberal" economists of last century and by numerous socialist journals of to-day—all these tend to weaken our conception of the binding nature of conjugal duty, and incline parents to adopt a lower view than they should of the grandeur and importance, both social and religious, of the education of their children. Imperceptibly, the most dastardly practices seem less loathsome, less worthy of blame; and if you, dear Christian parents, do not decide to offer a resistance of the utmost vigour, you will live to see crime installed—a not unwelcome guest—in your inmost homes.

Vice, moreover, has a tendency to turn to its own advantage the unwholesome favour of public opinion, and it is nothing unusual for decent married folk to find themselves exposed sometimes to the galling commiseration of people who seem to have forgotten that duty comes before the follies of luxury, fashion, and the pursuit of comfort, sometimes to the malicious sneers of renegades who esteem themselves smart because they have thrown over the dignity of home life. And all because these good, decent people have loyally done their duty, regardless of the uncertainties of the future. Of a similar description is the fact that when certain parents discuss the conditions of the marriage contract in presence of their children, selfish speculation disguises itself in the cloak of prudence in order to impose shameful limits or compromises on the generous whole-souled integrity of the young couple.

Well, dear parents, these speculations—as bad as they are apparently good—rest on one and the same great fundamental error. You

forget, you misapprehend what you owe your children. No one is likely to blame *you* because, being sixty years old and weary after a life of toil, you desire the restful security and ease to be found in your possessions, moderate or large. But your children, fifteen or twenty years old, on the threshold of life with its struggles and straits—what have *they* to do with restful ease? What they want is confidence and energy. Give it them: give them force; give them buoyant courage; give them fearlessness. Teach them that their social duty is to produce before they consume. They must not, being young, examine the possibility and conceive in secret the hope of profiting by the savings which your death will place in their hands—and all without their lifting a finger. No; they must feel the prick of necessity. And therefore you must not think you are acting wisely in urging your children to rest content with that place on the social ladder which your energy and thrift have helped you to attain. You must teach them that the point they start from is of small importance. That which really matters is the point at which they arrive. The most lamentable service parents can render their children is to exempt them, not from the *law* of labour, because that is superior to their wills, but from the *necessity* of labour, without which can be formed neither strong characters nor a hardy people.

Brethren, have you forgotten your catechism? Sloth is one of the seven capital sins: that is, it is one of the poisoned sinks from which all other vices may flow. You would like your daughters to have such dowries as would remove the idea of their being sought after simply for themselves—for their beauty—of body, mind, and character—for their fitness to become mothers and to assume successfully a mother's duties. It were far better for them

that they should never marry than that they should be delivered up, innocent victims, to the pleasures of rakes and rufflers, who, after a tempestuous youth, are conscious of an attenuated inclination to reform, though in point of fact they are only yielding—unwittingly, it may be—to an imperative desire of bodily comfort and enjoyment without unpleasant aftermath. Again, you would like each of your sons to step into an established position, protected from all risk, thus depriving them of every incentive to healthy and fruitful initiative, and procuring them a ready-made success they have done nothing to earn. Now can you not see that instead of educating them, that is, instead of helping or compelling them to make the most of the resources Nature has given them—their brains, their will, their muscles—you are only pandering to their conceit and their laziness, and assisting the incubation—in the hearts of the children you love and in whom it is your ambition to see your second selves—of the worst instincts of the human beast? Have you never heard the malediction hurled at the sluggard by St. Paul, the most splendidly intrepid pioneer of Christian civilization? "Si quis non vult operari, nec manducet"—"If any man will not work, neither let him eat"?[1]

Quite recently a careful observer of contemporary conditions mentioned, in our presence, a club where young men squander in gambling or vapid and pointless babble as much of their time as is not wasted on sport or the theatre or worse amusements. And, alluding to the catastrophe which overwhelmed Messina, he added, "Should that club suddenly collapse and should those who haunt it cease to cumber the ground, Belgium would not be a penny the worse, and industry, politics, science, and art would go on exactly as they did before."

[1] 2 Thess. iii. 10

Is it not shameful that, instead of setting a good example, as, in *their* position, they ought, these young fellows prefer to provide matter for caustic remarks such as I have just quoted?

In splendid contrast to these scurvy specimens are those families among the aristocracy and the middle and labouring classes where numerous children, like olive branches, surround, with a large and vigorous crown, the parent stem from which they spring; filling the home with life, movement, and the light of joy; where the warmth of filial and brotherly love prevents the parents' thoughts from dwelling too insistently on the difficulties and trials inseparable from human existence, and gives them promise of an honoured age, knowing neither loneliness nor abandonment. Tell me, is there a finer sight in this world, is there anything more comforting, more worthy of our deep respect than one of those families, still numerous—God be thanked—in the midst of our good people, and especially so among the working classes; families where six, eight, ten, and more children grow, develop, and take shape in the school of labour, aye, even in the sterner school of privation and sacrifice? Those are the workshops where strength and energy are forged, where character is stamped upon a man. "When I inspect those who are ascending the social ladder and those coming down, I observe that the former wear clogs and the latter patent-leather shoes." So says Paul Leroy Beaulieu, an economist of the highest authority. Now, of course, I am quite aware, dear fellow-workmen, that all your sons are not going to climb the social ladder. I should be sorry indeed if you desired them all to make their fortunes in the city. No, many will remain with you in the village where they were born. But the very congestion in your home will drive some of its members to join the swarming hives where

industrial activity is concentrated. There, as the rush of newcomers becomes greater, the inventive spirit becomes keener, machinery more perfect; the products of the earth are exploited with more knowledge and greater thoroughness, and business openings are sought for more fiercely. Thus by reason of the very condensation of town population, industrial and commercial progress has been greatly accelerated. Now who is the best equipped and therefore the most likely to succeed in this economic turmoil? It is the young man who comes of a large family. Broken to a life of toil from his youth, schooled to endurance, endowed with a character softened and sweetened by the gentle friction of family life, and possessing a will, strong but well controlled, he has in his own hands the makings of a fine career. And when the spirit of Christ is at work in a family, the older children become the watchful guardians of the little ones, the strong ones assist the more intelligent to rise in their profession. Each one recognizes the obligation of helping the other, and through this mutual help, the bonds of family love are drawn tighter and tighter, while the parents contemplate with pride the fruits of their years of toil, and cherish the hope of an old age spent in honour and placid security. I know well that there is another side to this genial picture, and I have not the slightest intention of blinking the fact that if you look for dark patches, you will find them. By bringing up a large family, you do not necessarily attain success there and then, but you undoubtedly pave the way to it. The struggle is hard, but excellent in its results. For while the children are very young, when one follows closely upon another, the parents may find life very distressing, and a brief stoppage of the daily wage through unemployment, or the descent of sickness upon the home,

may plunge them in a sea of grinding hardship and bitter sorrow. That this is the truth nobody denies, and nobody, as far as I know, has yet discovered how suffering is to be done away with. But mark the difference. The working man who has only one or two children, is very likely to see them leave home on the first opportunity, spend their wages in the public-house or some other similar resort, and brutally deny their parents—in their age or infirmity—that pittance which law and decency alike demand of them. But the father and mother who have brought up many children in the faith of Christ possess, in the thews and sinews of each of their children, a capital well invested, and by placing them under the happy necessity of employing their abilities, they augment the resources of the family and compel its members to essay the task of self-development with greater energy, patience and love.

Should some unlooked-for crisis arise for one of these numerous families, then the public authorities must come to the rescue, and in their default, private charity must fill the breach.

The theories concerning the equality of individuals extolled by the French Revolution, have not quite lost their hold upon us as yet. Our social legislation is excellent as far as it goes, but it does not go far enough. We must endeavour to grasp more firmly the idea that in the composition of the social body, the organic unit is the family, not the individual, consequently we must make it our business to secure, as far as we can, a more equitable distribution of taxation—so that less shall be asked of those who have many children, and more—to balance matters—of those who have not had the generosity and courage to furnish more citizens to the general society.

I spoke of private charity just now, and I

quite expect to be howled down by such as court favour and popularity with the masses. They will tell you that the receipt of charity is degrading to the people. That, my brethren, is transparent nonsense, and unworthy your consideration. That a man should beg when he could live on his pay, if he were minded to work—that is degradation if you like. But our Divine Master has said—what everybody recognizes as a fact—"the poor you have always with you." And there are poor, unfortunate folk who, in spite of their good will and honest efforts, are altogether—or for the time being—unable to support themselves and their families.

For such as these, you demand compulsory assistance and old age pensions. Excellent! There, I am heartily with you. But will you please explain to me in what precise respect the charity contributed by the taxpayer—with very great reluctance perhaps—carries less dishonour in its train than the help given with spontaneous delicacy by a neighbour or a friend? Charity is in a sense humilitating, because it is the badge of dependence, and no man likes to be dependent. But when given in the right place, there is no *dishonour* attached to it. Just consider for one moment, and you will observe that charity is given and received on every side of you. The young student gets his bursary, the artisan gets his bonus, the scholar has his travelling expenses paid, the man of letters receives an allowance to facilitate the production of some work of literary or scientific interest.

Now we must make every effort to restore to people's minds a correct notion of what genuine Christian charity really is. But more—we must practise it, spurring ourselves on by the remembrance that Our Lord, the better to teach us the grandeur of this virtue, deigned to identify Himself with the hungry, the thirsty

and the sick. "Whatever ye do to the least of these My brethren, ye do it unto Me." Even if it be true that the consciousness of dependence brings with it a certain measure of humiliation, what of that? A man is none the worse for it. Rather is he the better; for, like pain and sorrow, humiliation, if borne in patience, plays its own part in a man's education and gives him the strength to endure.

If then, my brethren, God has blessed your union with children, cast no envious glance at those whose homes are empty. Rather look with pity on the unions which are barren either through misfortune or deliberate crime. Give your boundless respect and praise and encouragement to those parents, whether rich or poor, who have sufficient reliance upon God and upon themselves to provide us with a plentiful generation, a numerous family which is to-day or will be to-morrow their crown of honour and worth. Their generosity and courage furnish our country with men of energy and character, men destined to fill high places in council or to stand in the forefront of battle; destined, in fine, to occupy the situations abandoned by sterile voluptuaries who never moved a finger to gain the wealth they most unworthily possess. From these families will arise, we may well hope, hardy colonists for our lands oversea, and to them the Church will look, and not in vain, for priests, missionaries, and apostles to renew and keep alive unfailingly the forces of religion and charity.

God's blessing on the union of our first parents—"increase and multiply"—is no empty form of words; neither is it a snare to the unwary. The Church does not flatter only to deceive with a vain and illusory dream, when she calls down upon the bride the blessing of fruitfulness, and desires that as parents she and her husband should see a plenteous seed, their children and their children's children even

to the third and fourth generation. And here again, to take a wider outlook, the Catholic Church possesses, in her moral teaching, the principles which will solve one of the gravest questions in social economy. I speak of that problem which has for its object the accommodation of increasing population with the limited productivity of the soil. As a solution of this difficulty, the apostles of neo-Malthusian doctrines—who also practise what they preach — enthusiastically proclaim the voluntary restriction of child-birth, and in compensation they offer you the satisfaction of sense in defiance of nature. There you have the theory of static sterility, the harbinger, the forerunner of utter ruin to peoples that are base enough to carry it out in practice.

In the fourth century before the Christian era, Greece was unequalled, in the splendour of her civilization, by any other nation ; but after her leaders of thought—even Plato and Aristotle—had preached sterility as a remedy for possible difficulties in the future, there fell upon the land a scarcity of men, as contemporary writers tell us. And in the second century Greece lost her independence, because there were no soldiers to confront the Roman arms. And what is true of Greece, is true of Rome under the Empire. Voluntary sterility dried up the wellsprings of the city's life, and the disruption of the Empire speedily ensued.

In France, at the present moment, men who love their country are sounding the alarm. Listen to this statement recently uttered before a distinguished audience by M. de Foville, the French economist : " About the year 1850 the territory now occupied by the German Empire contained the same number of inhabitants as France. We were on equal terms. In 1895 Germany had the advantage of us by some six millions, and in 1908 the excess reached twenty millions. Thirty-nine millions on one

side, on the other sixty millions odd. If matters proceed at this rate in twenty years' time there will be two Germans to one Frenchman—always supposing of course that France is not absorbed by Germany in the meantime."

Even if we assume that immigration would fill up the empty spaces left by this depopulation, what then? The result would be that France would lose every national characteristic and give place to some strange, mongrel, cosmopolitan mixture in which the fine qualities of the race would run vast risk of disappearance.

There is only one doctrine that makes for progress, and that is Christian morality combined with conjugal duty and integrity. On individuals and families alike it enjoins the necessity of patient and persevering toil. It encourages fruitful initiative and effort; it pours blessings upon large families where initiative and effort bud and blossom. It condemns most utterly the pleasures that consume and do not produce. To all peoples it repeats with unwearying iteration the words of Scripture, "increase ye and multiply: go forth upon the earth and fill it." The world is wide enough to contain and support the swelling generations of the children of men; but it does not yield up its treasures overwillingly; they must be wrested from it by main force. The earth is not a heap of treasure, which men may share among themselves, in such sort that each one's portion should increase according as the number who ought to have a share grows less. No; but the treasure grows greater in proportion to the spirit, the ability, the courage of those who do battle to acquire it. Man's life is a relentless warfare: "Militia est vita hominis super terram."[1] And civilization is the fruit, progress the reward of conquest.

[1] Job vii. 1.

There you have the teaching of Christian morality to the family and the nation. And, beyond all else, it recalls to us in every page of the Gospel, the theme on which our Saviour based His first sublime Sermon on the Mount. Forget not that you are here upon earth only to leave it. Life for you is no more than a pathway, beset with thorns and brambles, to your abiding city, Paradise. If, as you trudge along it, anxiety and disappointment should bear heavily upon you, then raise your eyes to Him: for in heaven you have a Providence fatherly, wise, and strong, to watch over you and keep your steps that they stumble not. "Therefore I say to you, be not solicitous for your life, what you shall eat, nor for your body what you shall put on. Behold the birds of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they? And which of you by taking thought, can add to his stature one cubit? And for raiment why are you solicitous? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. And if the grass of the field, which is to-day and to-morrow is cast into the oven, God doth so clothe: how much more you, O ye of little faith? Be not solicitous therefore, saying, What shall we eat: or what shall we drink, or wherewith shall we be clothed? For after all these things do the heathen seek. For your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things. Seek ye therefore first the Kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you" (St. Matt. vi. 25-33).

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THE SOCIAL SENSE: ITS DECAY AND ITS REVIVAL

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What do we mean by the Social Sense?

The expression is not so common or so generally understood as to allow me to take it for granted that in using it I can be sure that my readers will assign the meaning to it that I intend.

Something in the nature of a definition, therefore, will have at least this use, that in what I am going to say my readers will, whether they agree with me or not, know exactly what I wish to convey when I use the expression and when I endeavour to discuss what caused the decay of the Social Sense, and to what we owe its revival.

The Social Sense, as I understand it, is compounded of several elements. It is a consciousness of the needs of Society and of its members. It is a sense of responsibility to Society for the condition in which it finds itself; it is the recognition of an obligation on the part of the individual to contribute in whatever way he can to the well-being of Society. It is, in practice, the service by the individual of Society in its members. Urged by the possession of the Social Sense, a man looks not only to his own well-being, he looks to the well-being of others and makes that his aim.

It is quite obvious that this Social Sense is not a universal possession. Unfortunately there are only too many who never realize any sense of responsibility in regard to others, whose creed is like that maliciously assigned to the Yorkshireman—"Do nowt for nowt, or if tha does, do it

for thi sel"; who never, therefore, look beyond their own immediate interests; a great many more—and very good people, too—whose sense of obligation begins and ends with the alms they distribute, or the personal suffering or needs which they charitably relieve, whose attention is fastened on the fact of suffering, ignoring altogether its cause, who feel some responsibility for the individual, but none for the conditions that are so largely effective in making the individual what he is.

On the other hand, fortunately for the Commonwealth, people are to be found who are keenly conscious of the defects of Society, who devote themselves in many fields to the removal of these defects, who do not spare themselves and who try to influence others in order to secure the best conditions of life for all. In other words, there are people in whom the Social Sense is keen and works keenly, who realize that many social evils arise out of inefficient organization and are therefore preventable.

Now where does this "Social Sense" come from? How is it that some people seem to be without it, or are only feebly animated by it, whilst in others it seems so strong? Can we account for this—and if so, how do we account for its existence in some and for its decay or absence in others?

These are questions to which I want to call attention. It will simplify what I want to say, and it will make my meaning clearer, if I set out my principal conclusions before I attempt to establish them. As regards these conclusions, it must be remarked that because they depend to a large extent upon historical evidence, it will be impossible to do more than suggest the nature and sources of the facts which justify them. My contention is that the Social Sense as I have defined it is the direct product of Christianity, the direct outcome of Christian principles; that it came into being with Christian teaching, that it was embodied in Christian practice, that it was cultivated in the early Christian Church, that it grew and flourished with the spread of Christianity until it reached its highest development when the influence of undivided Christendom was at

its height. I say also that its comparative decay dates from the break-up of Christian unity by the movement known as the Reformation, and I urge that the modern revival of this sense, expressing itself in the effort for social betterment, is a legacy from Catholic Christendom; that the passion for justice and the compassion for the poor which find a modern outpouring in so many diverse forms have their origin in the Catholic spirit, even when they disguise themselves as Humanitarianism and indignantly repudiate a religious inspiration.

Lastly, and as a consequence, I maintain that the one body which has never lost the Social Sense, the one organization which has kept that sense alive through all the social and political mutations that the world has undergone during the growth and development of modern civilization, is the Catholic Church.

Now, there is a preliminary point to be settled before the main argument is reached. We must have clear notions about the mode of action of Christianity upon social life. The kingdom of Christ is not a political kingdom, the empire of Christ has no territorial limits. Christianity has not worked by merely political enterprise nor by means of revolution, nor with the power of armies behind it, nor like a parliamentary code forcing people to do certain things or to adopt a particular form of organization.

Christianity is a moral power, and though it does and must influence political and economic changes, it does so only because politics and economics have a moral side, because they raise problems which not unfrequently are in their ultimate analysis problems of morality.

Thus the Christian Church has always worked in whatever social medium it found itself; it has never sought to establish directly a new social origination. It brought Christian principles to bear upon things as it found them; and though this resulted in mighty changes, these changes grew, not out of any formal, preconceived design, but out of the new light and the new spirit which were introduced, rendering unsupportable whatever existing social relations

were repugnant to Divine law or in express contradiction to it.

We see this fact illustrated in the first-fruits of Christian teaching as they affected Roman civilization. This civilization, I must content myself with reminding you, rested, until the Church of Christ came into being, almost completely upon a basis of slave-labour. The population of the great cities of the Empire divided themselves sharply into two classes—the slaves and their owners. Most of the labour was done by these slaves, and work was held in contempt as being the function of a degraded being—one whose nature differed from that of his master and belonged to an altogether lower order.

The idea of the essential dignity and equality of man, the recognition of inalienable human rights, did not, except in a narrow and limited sense, then exist. The nature of property was that of absolute ownership—all rights and no duties. It included not only the possession and use of that which was owned, but the absolute and unrestricted disposal of it. And from this conception of property even human beings were not excluded, and the huge numbers of slaves were chattels in just the same sense as the beasts of the field or the implements of domestic service. A slave was a being without rights, without a personality. The owner of a slave was not embarrassed by any duties to his property; the life of a slave was as completely at his master's disposal as his labour.

Now, an ideal of property such as this, a social organization of this kind, were entirely incompatible with the existence of a Social Sense. And, as a matter of fact, outside those political engagements which were necessary for the stability of Society, and those family arrangements which were suggested by the ties of kindred, the citizen of the Roman Empire neither felt nor showed any sense of obligation with regard to his fellow-citizens. At our Saviour's birth the Social Sense, as I have defined it, did not exist.

Into a world thus morally defective came the teachers of

a new religion with principles that were not only astoundingly novel, but also in direct contradiction to the most firmly established social beliefs. The opening words of the Lord's Prayer were the charter of liberty for the human race. The *Our* Father was the proclamation of the brotherhood of man. All men, Christianity taught, were born with an equal destiny. They were all creatures of God; the message of salvation was for all, without exception; for the slave as well as for the emperor; for the common man equally with the noble. The slave was born to the same high purpose as his master. His being was of a nobility equal to his owner's.

The most novel, and the most repugnant aspect of Christianity to the Roman pagan, as we can well imagine, was this exaltation of the miserable chattel to the level of his master. We can well understand how the Christians came to be regarded as the subverters of Society. They were so, indeed, for the brotherhood of man in Christ and the fatherhood of God was a doctrine that had of necessity to sweep away the very foundations upon which pagan Society rested.

Again, the founder of Christianity was "the son of a carpenter." Labour was dignified in the very fact of Christ's social position. His followers taught the necessity of labour as part of the scheme of human life. "He that will not work," wrote St. Paul, "neither let him eat." And St. Paul meant it. The Apostles were working-men; St. Paul practised the calling of a tent-maker, "labouring with the work of his hands." Cicero had written that the labour of artisans was ignoble. Christianity said that it was noble and necessary.

The pagan notion of property was, furthermore, profoundly assailed by the new teachings. Property ceased to be a matter of rights only, it became a matter also of duties and obligations. Property had not only a use, but a right use. Thus from the very outset two principles were taught by Christianity that were destined to revolutionize the organization of Society, and to lay the foundation of a

new civilization. These were the far-reaching doctrines of justice and charity, which introduced an entirely new conception of the relations between men in Society. They created a whole series of obligations, the sense of which was destined to saturate the social organism, to take shape in civil law, and to fructify in a universal machinery of social help, as totally foreign to the pagan conception as the ideals were which gave it birth. Thus was the soil prepared in which the Social Sense sank and grew. It was thus that the idea of social obligations entered into human thought, and became the source whence has sprung every effort at social betterment that the world has witnessed since.

There was, moreover, a second stimulus to its growth. Along with the slow permeation of Christian teachings in the minds of men, along with the gradual acceptance of Christian morality in theory, there grew up an astounding organization of Christian work. The principles of social responsibility took shape in practical effort. Christian Society from the start recognized the duty of coming to the help of the weak and distressed. From the earliest days of the Church, provision was made for the sharing of wealth, so that the superfluities of the well-to-do supplied the necessities of the poor. I need not recall the first beginning of this work, which is recounted with convincing simplicity in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. Paul. And, as we follow the history of the infant Church, we are met at every step by this close alliance of practical application with the social principles established by our Lord's teachings. Even in the first century each separate Christian congregation had its organized machinery of social help, and a document of this date[1] is remarkable as showing not only the fact that this machinery was at work, but the common-sense spirit in which its functions were discharged. Speaking of the stranger coming to the local Church it says, "If he has no craft, according to your wisdom provide how he shall live as a Christian amongst you, but not in idleness. If he will not do this he is

[1] *The Didache of the Apostles.*

trafficking in Christ. Beware of such men." Moreover, at this early period provision was made for the support of the clergy, for assistance to widows and orphans, to the destitute, the aged, the sick, and the imprisoned (often in those days a large number), and decent burial was given to the neglected dead.[1] Lecky, in his *History of European Morals*, bears witness to the same fact, saying, "A vast organization of charity, presided over by bishops, and actively directed by deacons, soon ramified over Christendom, till the bond of charity became the bond of unity, and the most distant sections of the Church corresponded by the interchange of mercy."[2] When Christianity became, under Constantine, the official religion of the Empire, the social problems facing the Church grew enormously in extent. It must not be imagined that a Christian emperor meant a Christian people; but it meant that the Church, being freed from the terror of persecution, could now advance to the full measure of its opportunities, and pursue its mission in some sort of peace: and so we find a rapid development, not only of its missionary enterprise and ecclesiastical organization, but also of its social effort. The care of the unfortunate became the occasion of a more elaborate and detailed system of charity. A definite portion of the Church's revenues were set aside for the relief of the needy. The bishop's house became a centre of charitable work; there was a special office for the work, an officer (*œconomus*), who was one of his priests, in charge; there were deacons, subdeacons, and deaconesses to assist, and thus the poor, the aged, and the sick were known and cared for. Special institutions (*xenodochia*) came into being. Originally intended as hospitals for strangers, they gradually developed in usefulness and took upon themselves the care of the sick, the homeless poor, widows, abandoned children, and other helpless classes. By the time of Gregory the Great (*c.* A.D. 540–604) these institutions

[1] See *Catholic Encyclopædia*, vol. iii, p. 595: "Charity," by John A. Ryan.

[2] *History of European Morals*, vol. ii (3rd edit.), pp. 79–80.

were to be found in nearly every city of the Empire. Besides this there is evidence of the existence of maternity institutions, of special care of the blind and the dumb, the ransoming of prisoners of war, and even the provision of dowries for poor girls. At this period the writings and homilies of the Fathers of the Church furnish abundant evidence of the keen sense of social injustice which had long since become an integral part of Christian sentiment. "The bishops," says Professor Ryan,[1] "protested strongly against the excessive taxes and the harsh methods of collecting them, against the landowner's oppression of his tenants, and the extortion practised by the usurer; against the forcible enslavement of freemen, the tyranny of civil officials, and the injustice of the courts, against the inhuman treatment of slaves, and in favour of emancipation."

A new factor in the social work of the Church came into being in these early centuries, with the spread of the monastic system in Europe and the foundation of monasteries (*c.* A.D. 500). These were destined to play a great part not only in the spiritual development of the Christian work, but also in its material progress. From their very beginning they were centres of labour as well as of piety. The monks set an example of Christian perfection in their lives and a model of Christian industry in their occupations. These occupations, at first mainly manual, grew with the necessities of the communities in which they lived so that very soon they "supplied physicians for the sick of the neighbourhood, maintained hospitals for all classes of the distressed, reared and educated the young, and during the fifth century were about the only places of refuge for persons whose homes lay in the track of the devastating barbarians."[2]

Cunningham, in his *Western Civilization*,[3] says of the monks that they "helped to diffuse a better appreciation of the duties and dignity of labour, their manual activity

[1] Ryan, *Catholic Encyclopædia*, vol. iii, p. 597.
[2] *Loc. cit.*, p. 596.
[3] Vol. ii, p. 35.

had great influence as an element in material progress, and they did not a little to disseminate the industrial arts, to improve agriculture, and to develop more regular commercial intercourse." "They preserved the knowledge of manual arts,"[1] often in danger of being lost in the wild and unsettled periods between the break-up of the Roman Empire and the comparative calm that followed the settlement of Charlemagne (*circa* A.D. 800).

The legislation of that monarch bears evidence of the Church's influence upon the social standards of the time. He re-established a regular machinery for the needs of the poor so that "every form of genuine distress was to be relieved; but idlers, vagabonds and beggars were to be turned away and compelled to work."[2]

At a later period the extent to which the sense of social obligation had imbued the mediæval mind is obvious upon the most superficial survey of the institutions to be seen in operation. It is seen in the work of the Church and its organizations, it is seen in municipal activities, it is seen in trade organization, it is seen in the form which economic discussion assumed.

Every country that had embraced Christianity had a wonderfully complete system of institutions for the relief of distress of all kinds—hospitals, almshouses, guest-houses, orphanages were everywhere to be found, whilst special communities of religious men and women devoted themselves to their administration. Every fresh need of the time was met by a special provision. Leprosy, for example, which was terribly common, occasioned, according to Matthew Paris, the erection throughout Europe of no less than 19,000 special hospitals.

Even road-making and bridge-building were made the care of a religious organization; whilst the ransoming of captives from the Moors gave occasion to many for the display of Christian charity amounting to heroism. But social endeavour was not confined to the religious. The municipalities of the free towns and cities took much

[1] Page 38. [2] Ryan, *loc. cit.*, p. 597.

charitable work upon themselves and built and maintained hospitals and other institutions for the help of those in need.

In their further and fuller development in the Middle Ages monasteries fulfilled many other social functions. They provided very largely for education—secular as well as religious; they reclaimed waste lands, they supplied the necessities of the poor, they were model landlords.

But perhaps the most striking evidence of how completely the sense of social responsibility had taken possession of the mediæval mind is to be found in the economic views and the economic organization of the trades in the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries. The Trade Guilds were a really remarkable phenomenon. Their activities included provision for the sick, for widows and orphans, for disability, for old age; they did more for the help of their members in time of distress than the most successful and best-managed trade union in the twentieth century. But what I think is most significant in their work was the fact that they secured a living wage for their workers by fixing the prices of commodities. Of course, at this day, when the principle of competition has become such an ingrained element in commercial relations, it is the fashion to ridicule the methods of the Middle Ages. But as Cunningham observes, "the ethical standpoint which they took is well worth examination, and the practical measures which they recommended appear to have been highly beneficial in the circumstances with which they had to deal."[1]

The difference between the modern and mediæval method of determining the price of an article is just the difference between the modern and mediæval conception of human dignity. At this moment prices are settled by competition, and the workman receives that portion of the price which is left when the other elements in the cost of production are satisfied. But the masters of the mediæval guild took wages as the basis of productive cost. The man's needs were the prime element in cost of production,

[1] *Western Civilization*, p. 78.

and prices were based on the consideration that the labourer was entitled to a living wage for his work. He got his living wage in pursuance of a principle. Nowadays the workman gets it (when he does get it) more or less as the result of an accident. The principle of finding a just price for an article, such just price being determined by the "common estimation," may be open to the criticism of political economists, but it is a sound principle of morality. And this "common estimation," according to Professor Cunningham, "expressed itself in the deliberate opinion of the good men of the craft, who understood the conditions of production, the expenses of materials and the cost of labour, and who could thus calculate a reasonable price for one group of commodities." In short, it may be said that prices were determined by men who had a social sense as part of their moral equipment in the Middle Ages, just as it may be said that prices to-day are determined by the utterly unmoral and frequently immoral methods of competition.

The effect of the Church's teaching and example upon human thought and action in regard to social relations has been excellently summed up by a modern authority already frequently quoted, Professor Cunningham :—

"Mediæval Society was permeated with moral conceptions which had been entirely strange to the ancient world ; the institutions of the Middle Ages had been gradually formed under the influence of religious principles which the old world would have explicitly denied. There was first of all a keen sense of personal responsibility in the employment of secular power of every kind ; the responsibility of rulers to God for the exercise of their power over their subjects was strongly insisted upon, as well as the fact that the rich man must render account of the use he had made of his wealth ; it had been entrusted to him by God and he must use it for God. There was an extraordinary contrast between the spirit of the Roman like Cato, whose only sense of duty was to become richer, and that of the mediæval proprietor who had learned that he was merely a trustee and responsible for the manner in which he used his money. . . . The main contribution of mediæval society to the economic progress of mankind lay in its success in moralizing industrial and commercial conceptions and institutions." [1]

[1] *Western Civilization*, p. 104, *sqq*.

The enormous and evil working change from the condition thus set forth by Professor Cunningham to the conditions which were to be found at the commencement of the new industrial organization that came into being from the end of the eighteenth century is worthy of some further reflection.

I have said that this change is the product of the so-called Reformation.

The Reformation did two definite things: it established the principle of Individualism in religion, "emancipating" the human conscience from what is called "bondage to authority" and starting the movement towards what is with unconscious humour styled "free thought," whilst by its doctrine of "justification by faith alone" it discouraged charitable activity. The corporate idea of social organization, which is the essence of the Catholic doctrine, the responsibility of one man for another, the solidarity of human interests where humanity is a family with God for the father and Christ for its king and elder brother, crumbled away in the selfish disruptive individualism of Protestantism.

Luther taught that good works were not only not necessary to salvation, they were not even useful to salvation. And as this doctrine gained ground works of charity diminished, whilst it afforded a convenient justification for many acts of plunder. In the countries where the reformed religion was established, the goods of the Church, the possessions of the monks, the charitable foundations of pious benefactors were confiscated by the State, and for the most part fell into the hands of greedy laymen to be turned to private uses. The history of the Poor Law in this country is very instructive upon this point. The patrimony of the poor having disappeared, with it disappeared for many a long day that sense of duty towards the poor that is characteristic of a Catholic civilization. Yet it is interesting to notice that during the centuries that followed the religious upheaval the old vigorous growth of charitable activity, however hampered by unfavourable

conditions, never ceased in the Catholic Church. The mediæval framework was shattered, but the spirit that gave it birth survived.

One after another fresh religious communities devoted to social work, appositely called the "Active" Orders, came into being and spread over the world their beneficent activities. The care of the sick, the upbringing of the orphan, the education of children, the care of the blind, the deaf, and the mentally deficient, the need of the aged were undertaken by the numerous religious organizations that had their origin in France, Spain, and other Catholic countries, some of them local in their activities, but others like the Sisters of Charity, the Brothers of the Christian Schools, the Little Sisters of the Poor exercising their mission of mercy in all parts of the world. Whilst the political economy that grew out of the materialism of the free-thinkers of the eighteenth century was establishing the pernicious idea of unrestricted freedom in commercial activity, and paving the way for the *laissez-faire* of the Manchester school, the Catholic mind worked in its unvarying spirit of social help and combated by an example of self-sacrifice and a recognition of social responsibility the cruel spirit of selfishness and avarice that disgraced the industrial organization of the early nineteenth century.

Evil brings in some degree its own remedy. There are limits even to what the natural man will stand, and the state of affairs at that period at last caused a reaction. The condition of the worker was so appalling that, partly by means of his own spasmodic revolting and partly owing to the promptings of humanitarian feelings not altogether deadened, efforts began to be made for the reform of conditions that had become intolerable. With the new power that political reorganization and education conferred upon the people, social organization became the work of democracy.

To that degree, then, there was a revival of the Social Sense. But this modern development differed in essential characters from its prototype. In the first place it had its

origin in self-interest, and it expressed itself in legislative forms. The attempt to bring about more tolerable conditions of life for the masses that industry had herded together in huge communities was largely a response to the threatenings of a spirit of revolt. It no longer sprang spontaneously from the sense of Christian solidarity. It strove by the exercise of political influence to wrest from the privileged classes some share in the improved conditions of life. It was no longer the willing service of the whole community to those in need; it was the reconquering of a lost position by force, sometimes by physical force, by revolutionary violence, so strong was the entrenchment of wealth and power in its selfish isolation, and so oblivious of the claims of justice and charity. The Factory Acts, the right of workmen to associate, the regulation of the hours and conditions of labour—elementary concessions of this sort—were won only after long and arduous fighting. The principle of Individualism was dislodged only after many years and much suffering.

I think it is true to say that the only philosophy that underlay this struggle of the democracy was the philosophy of necessity. It was only later that definite principles of social organization—ideals to be worked for and led up to—made their appearance, and these ideals moved on two definite but widely diverging lines. One line was that of revolutionary change, with Marx and his fellow-workers as its spokesmen. The other was a return to Christian ideals, and was practically the work of Bishop Ketteler, of Mainz, and those who worked with him. To-day these two ideals are struggling for supremacy. Socialism, in many respects very much modified from the original teachings of its founders, seeks to re-establish relations of justice between the members of the community by establishing the communal ownership of the means of production. It would reorganize society upon an economic basis. The Catholic school also seeks a return to a corporate idea of social organization, but looks for its inspiration to the ideal of justice and charity which the Catholic Church has always

taught, and which had such a profound influence in shaping the organization and spirit of mediæval society. Socialism in its revolt against Individualism would impose fetters upon the individual that must subordinate him too greatly to the community. The Catholic ideal seeks to enlarge the privileges of the individual by making the organization of the community subservient to his legitimate needs and his natural dignity. Christianity says, "The State for the Man," because the man is immortal; Socialism says, "The Man for the State," for it ignores eternal life.

Both systems demand a large and widely diffused Social Sense for their success. But in an ultimate analysis it will be seen that Socialism has no higher motive to appeal to for the development of this Social Sense than self-interest, and no more compelling force behind it than a motiveless altruism. Catholicity, on the other hand, relies as ever upon the undeniable and effective motive of the will of God, the teachings of Christ, and the sanctions of reward and punishment made known by Revelation. It is unfortunately only too true that one of the worst social evils of the Reformation was the disastrous effect of its principles not only upon the economic ideas of the communities who adopted it, but also upon the Catholic mind in general, which, whilst it rejected it in theory, could not yet in practice escape its contagion. The poison of Individualism so permeated industrial life, its false morality was so generally accepted, that Catholics as well as others took its validity for granted. Nor could a keen sense of civic responsibility be easily developed in those who were long denied the status of citizens. It is thus we find in England, for example, that outside the definitely charitable social work undertaken by religious organizations, the social ideals of the Catholic community are almost as much in need of reconstruction as the ideals of non-Catholics.

The Social Sense of the Catholic, in spite of his right principles being checked by persecution and misled by example, also fell a victim to the decay that was prevalent in his non-Catholic environment.

This variety of the Social Sense, therefore, in spite of all that has been done in the past few years, is very nearly as much in need of revival amongst Catholics as amongst others. But it is of special importance that Catholics should recognize the mode in which the Social Sense has been lost, for there is a special need that in its recovery Catholic ideals of social responsibility and duty should be brought and kept before the world. There is some danger that, owing to ignorance of history and ignorance of the traditional social teachings of the Church, many Catholics may be involved in the dangers and errors that beset the secular and humanitarian ideals so much in vogue.

It is our business to promote with enthusiasm the revival of the spirit of social responsibility, but it is also very much our duty to aim at basing that responsibility upon immovable Catholic principles. When all is said and done everything good in the social spirit takes its origin in the Christian virtues of justice and charity. To be really lastingly effective these virtues must work in a community of convinced Christians, must be expounded with authority, and obeyed and practised from a supernatural motive. Without such a motive all social reform is beating the air; it can lead to nothing better than a coercive effort to secure some sort of equality in conditions that from its very nature can only bring out more virulently the very vices it seeks to combat. For us Catholics the nature of social reconstruction is set forth with most absolute certainty in the great truth: "Unless the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it."

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ENGLISH ECONOMICS AND CATHOLIC ETHICS [1]

By the Rev. MICHAEL MAHER, S.J., D.Litt.

A philosophical creed which has achieved much popularity during the last twenty years is that called Pragmatism. Its most characteristic doctrine is expressed in the statement that truth is simply utility for a long time and over a sufficiently wide area. The truth of a proposition, the truth of a theory means, in fact, that it works, that it is usable, and nothing more. Pragmatism is an unsound philosophy, because starting from this definition it is logically compelled to deny the existence of any absolute truth whatever. Still, in spite of its errors, there is this much of validity in the contention of the Pragmatists, that the workableness of a theory is one most important testimony to its truth. Consistency with enlarged experience is one of the surest forms of verification for any

[1] This pamphlet is an enlarged edition of a paper read at the General Conference of the Catholic Young Men's Societies of Great Britain, held at Southampton in 1911, and subsequently printed in their Annual Report.

hypothesis. And it has always been claimed by the defenders of Christianity and Catholicism—we may take them here as the same thing—that a most convincing evidence of its divine character lies in the remarkable manner in which the ethical teaching of Christ harmonizes with the deepest needs and highest aspirations of human nature, and also that if obeyed, it conducts to the maximum well-being of the race as a whole. After all, this is only what was to be expected. If human nature and human society come from God, then what is in union with the moral law of God must in the long run be good for mankind; and conversely it must be at least antecedently highly probable that what is really good for the human race is true.

The principle receives very interesting illustration in the recent history of a branch of knowledge to the importance of which Catholics in this country are now becoming alive—Social Science.

The Classical Political Economy.

The series of distinguished writers on Political Economy, from Ricardo to Fawcett and Cairnes, who may be fairly described as the Classical English Economists, notwithstanding differences on sundry points of greater or less importance, were generally agreed in their adhesion to certain doctrines, postulates, or assumptions which, owing to their adoption by these writers, got embedded in the economic literature and science of the century in such a

manner that it came to be deemed the most extravagant heresy to question or dispute those tenets. Yet a reflective student innocent of economic literature, who thirty years ago approached the consideration of these topics with nothing to guide him save Catholic instinct and the general principles of Christian Ethics, could not help feeling hesitations and misgivings in regard to several of the conclusions—or premises, he was not sure which —of these talented and persuasive writers. These doctrines were assumed, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, as either self-evident axioms or demonstrated inferences, and they possessed such a weight of economic authority behind them that, although they seemed hard to reconcile with some ethical or religious convictions, it was difficult at the time to indicate the precise nature of the error involved. There is, however, an iron logic in time ; and the last forty years have already exposed with singular vividness many erroneous teachings of these economists, and simultaneously supplied striking confirmation of the economic soundness of Catholic ethical precepts. In the short space at our disposal we must confine ourselves to the discussion of only two or three of the most celebrated articles of the orthodox economist's creed.

The Classical English Economists of last century defined political economy as the science of the laws of the production, exchange, distribution, and consumption of wealth ; though there was little attempt

by any of them at adequate treatment of the last section of this subject. Political economy was generally conceived by these writers as an abstract or hypothetical science deduced from a small number of principles. These were assumed to be true as general tendencies in the operations of external nature and the conduct of mankind in regard to wealth. Man, it was asserted, may from the standpoint of economics be looked on as a money-making and a bartering animal. He invariably seeks his own interest: he always buys in the cheapest and sells in the dearest market. The returns to industry do not continue to increase proportionally with the increase of labour. Population tends to multiply more rapidly than the means of subsistence. From these axioms and a few other propositions put forward as descriptions of obvious facts, a collection of abstract general statements in regard to the production and exchange of wealth were deduced. Some of these writers occasionally pointed out that as these preliminary assumptions were not strictly realised in fact, the conclusions should always be understood as subject to correction on account of the interference of other agencies. But as a rule, these warnings were soon forgotten by the writers themselves, and the general disposition amongst them was to treat their theoretical conclusions as approximately representing the real economic phenomena of the world around us, and to deduce from them definite practical maxims

and recommendations for the direction of governmental action and public opinion in regard to politico-economic problems. It is in these practical conclusions that the conflict with ethics especially arises. The Catholic student, as such, is not committed to the defence of any particular view as to the scope, character, or method of the science of Political Economy. He may advocate the deductive method with Mill, the inductive method with Cliffe Leslie, or the combined method with Henry Sidgwick ; or he may be enthusiastic for sociological monographs with Le Play, for the historical method with Roscher, or for a purely national economy with Frederick List. But when the economist proceeds from the exposition of economic generalizations as abstract hypothetical propositions to the deduction of political maxims and the advocacy of concrete positive measures designed to influence the actual methods of production, distribution, exchange, and consumption of wealth in the world around us, his doctrine passes outside the sphere of theoretic speculation and becomes the subject of ethical or theological criticism. He is now bound to show that it is in harmony, or, at all events, not in conflict, with the teaching of religion.

Malthusian Theory of Population.

One such doctrine which occupied a prominent place in the writings of the English Classical Economists is that known as the Malthusian theory

of population. In 1798 Malthus published his celebrated *Essay on Population*. It is a compound of history, speculation, and prophecy. Its main features lie in the statement that population tends to increase in a geometric ratio, whilst the means of subsistence only increase in a less rapid arithmetical ratio. Growth of population, he taught, was restrained by two kinds of agencies, positive checks such as war and famine, and preventive checks, such as abstinence from marriage and prudential restraint. His general conclusion was that population tends to excessive pressure on the soil and food supply.

Malthus' teaching was accepted almost as a new gospel by practically the entire school of the English Classical Economists. In particular John Stuart Mill, the ablest and most persuasive of them, devoted much space in his *Principles of Political Economy* to the exposition of Malthus' theory and to its application to the explanation and solution of many of the most urgent social problems. According to him one of the most universal causes of poverty and misery in the world at the time was over-population, and the greatest peril to general economic well-being in the future lay in the tendency to the rapid multiplication and the excessive pressure of the human species on the soil. To this was mainly due the prevalence of poverty and low wages in the United Kingdom, and also in many other countries. On the other hand, the condition of the

peasantry in France and some other continental nations, where population increased very slowly, was described by Mill and other economists as approximating to the economic ideal. Mill himself looked on France as worthy of special envy in this respect because "the rate of increase of the French population is the slowest in Europe." That was about the middle of the last century. But the Classical Economists did not confine themselves to the speculative tracing of abstract economic laws in a hypothetical society composed of Walter Bagehot's "economic men." They set themselves to advocate very practical measures to carry out their theoretical conclusions in the country in which they lived. Mill in particular again and again throughout his treatise —the most influential since the great work of Adam Smith—pleads for a propaganda among the labouring classes to create a public opinion in favour of checking the increase of population; and one of his frequent complaints there against the Catholic Church is that its influence has been unwisely used "to promote early marriages in order to avoid sin." Though amongst the economists Mill was the most vehement advocate of this doctrine, the school as a whole, from Ricardo to Fawcett, accepted the Malthusian theory.

Doctrine of Malthus Tested.

However, before the close of the nineteenth century the teaching of Catholic ethics on this subject

began to receive vindication even in the writings of the most distinguished economists. It began to be gradually recognized that Malthus had erred in ascribing to over-population in the England of his day the misery and want mainly due to abnormal conditions of industry and unwise legislation. Before the end of the century England had trebled its population, yet the wealth per head, the rate of wages, and the general conditions of the working classes had very much improved. On the other hand, in Ireland, though the population was rapidly reduced by emigration, the conditions of the people were not materially bettered till the real cause of the evil, the ruinous system of the land tenure, began to be ameliorated; and now for several decades past, the economists most conversant with the economic conditions of Ireland recognize that each further reduction of the population of that country, so far from being an advantage, is a most serious economic drain on the wealth-producing power of the nation.

But of all countries the subsequent history of France—the people so often held up for admiration and imitation in this respect by Mill and the rest of the school—the history of France has strikingly vindicated Catholic teaching. The excess of births over deaths in that country grew steadily smaller, from the time of Mill until to-day, when, were it not for the immigration of foreigners, the actual population would be shrinking from year to year.

And what does that mean? It means, as the French economists of to-day mournfully recognize, that the French nation is dying, and that unless a profound change speedily takes place, the French race will disappear and their rich and fertile land will pass to another people. In 1870, before the Franco-German war, the populations of the two countries were about the same—37,000,000. To-day France has about 39,000,000 people, whilst Germany has risen to 65,000,000. As the present annual birth-rate in France is under 800,000, whilst in Germany it is about 2,000,000, it is evident that in a very few years Germany will possess more than double the population of France. Professor Rambaud thus states the situation in the most significant manner: "Whereas the annual supply of conscript new recruits to the French army at present is 220,000, that of Germany is 450,000: and whilst the birth-rate of last year will furnish in 1930 not more than 200,000 French recruits, that of Germany will supply over 500,000" (*Cours d'Economie Politique*, vol. ii, p. 50; Paris, 1911). It is the law of history since the beginning of the world that those nations which increase and multiply will possess the lands of those which do not. But even here in England so eminent an economic authority as Professor Marshal, as far back as 1879, urged against Mill's practical deductions from the Malthusian theory that if these should be put into practice in England and other civilized countries,

the necessary consequence would be to hand over the future of the world to the Chinese and those races which refused to accept the injunctions of Malthusianism (*Economics of Industry*, 1st edn., p. 31). Its actual influence already in France and in America, he deemed, even from the economic standpoint, a source of great danger. Catholic doctrine teaches reasonable prudence in regard to marriage, but it has ever declined to substitute even the most confident maxims of Economic Science for the guidance of the moral law of God ; and the course of history vindicates its action.

Political Philosophy of Individualism.

Let us pass to another feature in the theory of the Classical Economists—their acquiescence in the universal dominion of the great principle of self-interest, and their singular belief that provided selfishness be enlightened it is essentially a benevolent economic force, which must ultimately always make for the public good. On this fundamental assumption was based their entire creed as to the general beneficence of free competition, of unrestricted liberty of contract whether in the price of goods, the remuneration of labour, the rent of land, or the rate of interest. In fact, their great maxim, "*Laissez faire*"—"Leave things alone"—which for them summed up the Law and the Prophets of political wisdom, was an immediate inference from this assumption. Let the State

avoid meddling. It is the business of Government to protect against fraud and physical violence and to enforce all contracts freely entered into ; but beyond this it should abstain from interference between man and man. The doctrine possessed much plausibility at the time, and some truth. It fitted in with the current system of political philosophy, inherited from Rousseau—indeed, from Locke. In that theory it was held that the authority of the Government is the outcome of a free contract of the individuals composing the State, and that each of these individuals gives up the minimum of his liberty compatible with the working of the State. Further it was assumed if each is permitted freely to pursue his own interests and to bargain freely, the common good will be most secured.

Neither this theory of the origin of civil power, nor its account of the legitimate functions of government, was likely to recommend itself to the student of the ethical philosophy adopted by the Catholic Church. According to that philosophy the authority of the State is from God, though the form of government and the distribution of power may be determined by the people. The end and the purpose of the State is the temporal well-being of the nation as a whole, and the means are to be adapted to that end. Amongst its primary functions is the protection of the weak and the securing of justice to all. The assumption that the unrestrained pursuit of his own interests by

each individual will always result in the maximum general good appeared, to say the least, very doubtful; whilst the doctrine that the business of government was merely to police a ring in which each individual, guided by enlightened selfishness, might freely struggle to secure the maximum share of the total produce, did not seem in harmony with the Church's conception of the brotherhood of man.

Self-Interest and Unrestrained Competition in Wages.

However ill adapted to modern industrial and social conditions may have become many of the regulations of mediæval guilds and paternal forms of government with rule of custom and status which prevailed in the Middle Ages, their total abolition and the substitution in their place of a régime of free competition and unlimited liberty of contract had the most disastrous effect on the condition of the labouring classes. Free competition where the competitors were not really equal meant the tyranny of the strong over the weak. On the one side were a multitude of unorganized labourers for whom the choice was to starve or to work for what remuneration they could get and under whatever conditions were offered to them: on the other side was a small number of capitalists whose inducement was maximum profit. For the one class the motive was the compulsion of the necessities of

life: for the other the desire of luxuries. The result might have been foreseen. The hours of labour were extremely long, the wages often extremely low, the conditions of work unsanitary and inhuman, and women and children were employed in tasks for which they were utterly unfit. Even employers who were anxious to exercise justice and humanity towards those working for them were themselves helpless under the system of unrestrained competition. Whilst the riches of the nation were increasing by leaps and bounds during the earlier decades of the nineteenth century, the conditions of the workers who contributed so much to this creation of national wealth, reached the lowest level of misery and degradation.

Yet the Classical Economy of the day could hold out little hope of betterment. The economic laws deduced from the principles of Malthus and Ricardo were represented as inflexible forces which could neither be suspended, evaded, nor diverted from their course. Human labour was like calico or pig-iron, a "commodity," and its price, like that of other commodities, was inexorably determined by the law of demand and supply. Any attempt to interfere, by legislation or public sentiment, with these immutable agencies could only result, it was maintained, in more evil than good. So *Laissez faire*, "Leave the production, exchange, distribution, and consumption of wealth alone," was held to be the golden rule of the new economic gospel.

But in the true philosophy liberty is only a means, the happiness, the well-being of the community is the end. Moreover, what is in appearance freedom, may often be very far from it in reality. Fortunately the public at large did not continue submissively to acquiesce in the conclusions of the economists, and though at first the advocates of ameliorative legislation always felt bound to put forward some excuse or pretext for State interference which professed to leave the sacred doctrines of free contract and free competition untouched, the long series of Factory Acts determining the condition of labour gradually extended their range and increased in force until, by the end of the century, they admittedly constituted one of the most valuable economic chapters in the British Statute Book, as well as the most admirable embodiment of the principles of equity. Yet they involve most serious curtailment of the formerly sacrosanct liberty of contract. Concurrently with this process of increasing legal restriction the labourers themselves combined into Trades Unions analogous to the mediæval guilds, whose *raison d'être* is to check individualism and limit competition among their own members. A primary object of such unions has always been to develop among their members a form of class loyalty or *esprit de corps* through which private sacrifices shall be cheerfully made for the good of the body, whilst the stronger and more skilful will give up something in order that the

weaker brethren may benefit. This feature of the Trades Union is sometimes made a ground of complaint against the system. I confess, for my part, that I could never feel the force of this objection. The professed aim of the Union, understood beforehand by all who enter it, is the general good of the body. But the benefit and protection of the weak inevitably exacts generosity from the strong. The fostering of public spirit and self-sacrifice even in this form is assuredly not blameworthy. The objectionable features of Unionism lie in the encouragement of class selfishness and insensibility to the just claims of those outside the organization rather than in the demand for self-denial on the part of the ablest of its own members.

Self-Interest in Commerce.

When we turn from the question of the remuneration of labour to the price of goods in the writings of the Classical Economists, we find much the same unquestioning faith in the beneficence of the law of supply and demand under free competition, and a similar superstitious regard for the inviolableness of free contract.

It was by Fawcett, if I remember aright, that man was defined as a "bartering animal." The pursuit of wealth is his strongest and most enduring passion. By a fundamental law of his nature he is always led to buy in the cheapest and to sell in the dearest market. And it was implied that he thereby does

most to improve the well-being of his country. As each knows best what he wants, all should be left to their own intelligence unhindered and unhelped in their bargaining. The maxim "*Caveat emptor*"—"Let the purchaser beware"—was to be universalized as far as possible. However, here again, as time went on, the moral sense of the nation and actual experience of human nature became too strong for the ratiocinations of the economists; and the Legislature has sanctioned a number of trade enactments, many of drastic character, with the object of preventing adulteration and false representation in regard to the nature and quantity of goods and their method of production—all in conflict with the principle that it should be left entirely to buyer and seller to protect themselves.

Free Competition in Rents.

Again, when we turn to the other great topic of the economic treatises, the rent of land, we find a similar change. In the *Laissez faire* theory, the rent of land, like every other contract, was to be determined by the force of competition and the free bargaining of landlord and tenant. The notion of any *justum pretium* other than that emerging from what Adam Smith called the higgling of the market, here, as elsewhere, was viewed as a mediæval superstition belonging to an age that had passed away for ever. Mill, to his credit, rose altogether above his general theory here in his eloquent

advocacy of a sweeping reform in the system of land tenure in Ireland, practically on the very lines on which it was carried out half a century later after a fierce agrarian war. Still, to the eulogizing of the competitive system by the economists was most probably largely due the long delay in this remedial legislation. And, in fact, the great Irish Land Act passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1881 was the most authoritative and complete condemnation of the *Laissez faire* creed during the whole century. Indeed the opponents of the Bill in Parliament urged not unfairly that the measure meant the banishment of the science of Political Economy, as previously understood, to the planet Saturn.

By that Act the fixing of rents by free competitive contract was abolished for the entire agricultural land of Ireland—valued at from one hundred to two hundred million pounds—and instead, Land Courts and Land Judges were, appointed by the State to decide what were fair rents.

We see, therefore, that the dogmas of the liberal economists, which possessed such a sway over men's minds during the first half of the last century, have had their authority gradually diminished, whilst the vital ethical aspects of social problems have come to be more and more clearly realized. Indeed, for a time Protestant individualism had so saturated general literature that insistence on ethical claims in the treatment of economic questions was liable, in the middle of last century, to be stigmatized as senti-

mentality or foolish enthusiasm. By mere reiteration the maxims of the economists had come to appear self-evidently true ; and even the Catholic reader whose habits of thought were inevitably affected by his daily intellectual food found himself at times gliding into a mental attitude on social problems which when analysed was, to say the least, not in close sympathy with the genuine spirit of Christian ethics. Measures like the Old Age Pensions, or the Employers' Liability and Workmen's Compensation Acts of 1900 and 1906, which most of us can now without any very violent effort recognize as based on principles of natural equity, would probably have seemed to some of us startlingly revolutionary, if not socialistic, as late as the seventies.

Fortunately, however, we Catholics posses a surer guide in social justice than even the growing wisdom of the British Legislature—the guardianship of the Faith of the Church by the Holy Spirit exercised through the teaching of the Sovereign Pontiff. Accordingly we cannot do better than cite here the great illuminating illustration of Catholic ethical principles and the method of their application to economic problems exhibited in the grand authoritative pronouncement of Leo XIII on the most fundamental and far-reaching of all sociological questions—that of the just remuneration of labour.

Leo XIII on Unrestrained Competition and the Living Wage.

These are his carefully weighed words: "We now approach a subject of great and urgent importance, and one in respect of which, if extremes are to be avoided, right notions are absolutely necessary. Wages, as we are told, are regulated by free consent, and therefore the employer, when he pays what was agreed upon, has done his part and seemingly is not called upon to do anything beyond. The only way, it is said, in which injustice might occur would be if the master refused to pay the whole of the wages, or if the workman should not complete the work undertaken; in such cases the State should intervene, to see that each obtains his due—but not under any other circumstances.

"This mode of reasoning is, to a fair-minded man, by no means convincing, for there are important considerations which it leaves out of account altogether. To labour is to exert oneself for the sake of procuring what is necessary for the purposes of life, and chief of all for self-preservation. *In the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat thy bread.* Hence a man's labour bears two notes or characters. First of all, it is *personal*, inasmuch as the exertion of individual strength belongs to the individual who puts it forth, employing such strength to procure that personal advantage on account of which it was bestowed. Secondly, man's labour is *necessary;* for without the result of labour a man cannot live; and self-

preservation is a law of nature, which it is wrong to disobey. Now, were we to consider labour so far as it is *personal* merely, doubtless it would be within the workman's right to accept any rate of wages whatever ; for in the same way as he is free to work or not, so he is free to accept a small remuneration or even none at all. But this is a mere abstract supposition ; the labour of the working man is not only his personal attribute, but it is *necessary ;* and this makes all the difference. The preservation of life is the bounden duty of one and all, and to be wanting therein is a crime. It follows that each one has a right to procure what is required in order to live ; and the poor man can procure it in no other way than through work and wages.

" Let it then be taken for granted that workman and employer should, as a rule, make free agreements, and in particular should agree freely as to wages ; nevertheless, there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that remuneration ought to be sufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice " (*The Condition of the Working Classes.* Catholic Truth ed., pp. 34–35).

Such is the judicial sentence of the Sovereign

Pontiff on the most fundamental assumption of the Classical School of Nineteenth Century Economics. Its bold and lofty vindication of the principles of natural justice would have astonished even John Stuart Mill himself! It is but another evidence that the Catholic Church remains ever the truest friend and the ablest and most uncompromising defender of the just rights of the poor.

But, further, we have also here instructive illustrations of the kind of help which Catholic Ethics and Catholic Theology may afford in dealing with social questions in the future. The revelation committed to the Church's guardianship does not contain a deposit of useful information respecting the facts or laws of sociology or of physical science. And it is true that the Gospel was not preached for the purpose of solving economic any more than chemical, geological, or astronomical problems. Still the religion of Christ is the divine doctrine of human life. It is given to teach both the individual and the nation how to live. Its laws and its counsels were designed by All-seeing Wisdom to fit human nature. They touch every man in every grade of society, in all his social relations, and in every stage of his existence. Conduct, as Arnold repeated, is at least three-quarters of life; and the Catholic Faith claims to furnish a perfect theory of conduct. If, then, the doctrine of Christ is an infallible message to teach man and to aid him to live, it must necessarily bear intimately and constantly on the

network of social problems which ramify through the complex organization of civilized society.

What, then, is the nature of the assistance we can hope for from Catholic doctrine [1] in dealing with social problems? Where that doctrine is accepted it provides *moral guidance* and *motive force.* Both these are necessary, though not sufficient, for the redress of the evils assailing human society. The moral guidance is of two kinds: negative or inhibitive, and positive. The Church may define certain forms of conduct as immoral. Measures which tend largely to increase such action will therefore necessarily be condemned. Again, she may declare that certain claims, efforts, or sacrifices, are *in se* right and just even though they happen to conflict with existing customs and institutions. Thus in the great principle given above defining the labourer's right to a living wage we have authoritatively promulgated an ethical rule of the most fundamental and far-reaching importance in economics. What was previously vaguely and hesitatingly held, frequently disregarded, and often implicitly rejected, is here enunciated as an unalterable truth by the highest authority in the Church. Under this ethical guidance should arise a right mental attitude in approaching social questions; and

[1] For the most authoritative exposition on Catholic Doctrine on Social Questions, see *The Pope and the People: Select Letters and Addresses on Social Questions by Pope Leo XIII.* Price one shilling (wrapper), two shillings (cloth). Catholic Truth Society.

this is not less needful than definite information in regard to matters of fact. For on these questions where personal interests are concerned prejudice and passion are very likely to mislead the judgement. It is for this reason that the motive force also supplied to the will by Catholic ethical principles is of so much value and importance. The suppression of evil always demands effort and sacrifice, and it is only from genuine religion can come the enlarged and enduring strength of self-denial required to bring about any considerable amelioration of the position of those suffering under the pressure of industrial conditions. For it is only through belief in a future existence that the inequalities inevitable here will be willingly borne by those who have the harder lot, or the instinct towards selfish enjoyment in those who happen to possess wealth and power overcome to any broad extent. The Catholic estimate of human life, its purpose and true value, is the only point of view from which an adequate and enduring solution of the larger social problems facing mankind can be accomplished.

But this, of course, does not mean that Catholic Ethics, or Catholic Moral Theology can furnish practical schemes for the removal of existing social evils, or decide the comparative efficiency of particular measures of reform which may be advocated. Obviously we cannot expect to deduce from the Gospel how a proposed factory act, poor law or insurance bill will work in practice, any more

than what will be the real incidence of a protective tariff. The answer to these questions can only be gleaned by a diligent study of the special branches of knowledge that deal with them.

Whilst, then, Catholic doctrine provides us with ethical principles for our moral guidance in economic and political speculation and moral motives to nourish practical zeal, and whilst in proportion as that doctrine is assimilated and acted upon it fosters the spirit of Christian solidarity, the social sensibility and the sympathetic instinct which are essential conditions of our handling with any hope of successful issue the grave and complex problems menacing human society; in addition to these the diligent study of economic theory and economic history, careful exercise in economic reasoning, and also direct personal familiarity with some of the concrete social problems created by the existing methods of production and exchange will form an indispensable part of the education of the Catholic social reformer at the present day.

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